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# metro

OTTAWA • WEEKEND DECEMBER 12-14 2008 metrone

**Celebrity Buzz**

Jessica has sights set on a wedding  
pg 42

# Strike snarls traffic

'Union wants to be as disruptive as possible,' Mayor O'Brien says

TIM WIECLAWSKI  
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

**No new face-to-face meetings took place Thursday as Ottawa residents struggled through another day without transit.**

Both the morning and afternoon commutes stretched on much longer than usual, and Ottawa police officers directed traffic as it crawled through the downtown.

Mayor Larry O'Brien thanked residents for their patience during a difficult and frustrating time.

"While the union wants to be as disruptive as possible, the city wants a negotiated and fair settlement for the taxpayers and OC Transpo drivers so we can restore transit services as soon as possible," he said Thursday.

Striking transit employees were in good spirits Thursday on the picket lines around OC Transpo's head offices on St. Laurent



A sticker expressing public frustration was put on a poster front of the Elgin Street entrance to the city hall parking garage, where striking OC Transpo employees slowed traffic. Inset: An Ottawa police officer directs traffic at the intersection of Laurier Avenue and Elgin Street during the evening peak period on Thursday.

and Belfast Roads as they warmed themselves around steel-barrel fires and swapped stories about the abuse they endured while picketing downtown.

Despite adversity, they seemed as determined as ever, insisting they will continue to strike until the city backs down on scheduling. One picketer swore he

would not agree to their scheduling proposal for even a \$10,000 signing bonus.

The block-booking system proposed by the city, he said, would force him to work 14-hour days and only be paid for an eight-hour shift.

Transit Services director Alain Mercier said the week-

day scheduling system has been the source of inefficiencies and a bit unfair to drivers, and potentially unsafe because some drivers are able to "cherry-pick" and end up getting paid for a full day's work, while less senior employees are scrambling for shifts.

"On the weekends, we organize all the work so that

it is equitable," Mercier said. "We want to make sure that drivers get the full eight hours rest daily, because some of the employees at the end of the day didn't get the best pick of work."

Mercier said they have offered in the collective agreement to ensure no operator would work longer than 13.5 hours.

# Automakers to get aid before budget, official says

Canada's Detroit Three automakers will probably get billions of dollars in emergency financial aid long before governments have any idea about the number of plant closings or job losses. It appears increasingly

likely that the federal and Ontario governments will piggyback potential U.S. legislation that provides immediate aid, but which would give automakers until the end of March to submit restructuring plans, Ontario

Economic Development Minister Michael Bryant said yesterday.

The lack of disclosure about the impact on operations and employment has sparked criticism from the Ontario government and

opposition politicians who remain in the dark about the future of some plants and thousands of jobs.

The Canadian Auto Workers union said the lack of knowledge is "nerve-racking" and unfair to taxpayers

and workers.

A senior official for the Conservatives revealed it expects to offer a "stimulus" package to the automakers before the Jan. 27 budget so it is "in sync" with U.S. aid.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

**Movies pg 22**

## Nominees for Golden Globes

## Business pg 16

## BCE buyout falls apart

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Hockey's biggest prize will be at city hall Saturday and Sunday when it visits the 125 Years of Hockey in Ottawa exhibit. The cup can be viewed from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. 125 Years of Hockey in Ottawa runs until Jan. 18 and features artifacts, images and video that showcase the city's rich hockey heritage. **METRO OTTAWA**

# Ottawa



## Warm donations needed

The need for winter coats and boots has outpaced donations at the Ottawa Mission. The city's biggest shelter is putting out the call for donations of new or gently used warm winter jackets for men, in sizes M-XXL. There's also a need for men's winter boots, specifically sizes 9 and 10. Donations can be dropped off any time at 35 Waller St., or arrangements can be made for pick-up of large donations by calling 613-234-1144, ext. 248. **METRO OTTAWA**

Holidays can be difficult when loved ones gone

**REMEMBERING** For people who have lost loved ones, the holidays can be a very difficult time, said Deborah Krogan, program co-ordinator of the Bereaved Families of Ontario-Ottawa Region.

"Everywhere you go, it's lights and music. It's a reminder that person is not going to be with you. And if this is the first holiday without the person, it's significant." Saturday, the organization is holding an event to let people know they're not alone in their grief.

Held in the Bronson Centre's Mac Hall at 6 p.m., the Remembrance Tree Service lets people know "there's a community of support out there."

Everyone is welcome to attend. **TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA**



Pook Toque employee Gregg Blackler, left, and Originals Christmas craft show manager Nancy Law ham it up with some hats at the popular booth, which offers toques, mitts and stuffed monkeys, all made from work socks by a group of friends in southern Ontario.

## Craft show still hopes for merry turnout

**TRACEY TONG**  
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

Faced with a triple whammy of a transit strike, snow and a recession, organizers and vendors at the 34th annual Originals Christmas craft show remain unfazed.

Despite a recession, the craft sales circuit has had a successful fall season, said show manager Nancy Law.

"I think we're seeing a shift in spending," she said at the show's opening yesterday. "People are still spending, but they're spending more discerningly. People are looking for Canadian items and items that support Canadian artists."

Tickleberry's of Okanagan Falls, B.C., has been doing the Ottawa show for the past 15 years.

The booth, which peddles dried fruit covered in Belgian chocolate, attracts re-

peat customers, but staffer Helen Walsh said she's "a little worried that the transit strike will affect sales."

So far, the first day was a little quieter than it usually is, she added.

"I guess we're a little worried," said owner Gord Lye of the recession.

Still, he's found that most of the people attending the show — after paying the entry fee — are ready to buy.

"What might happen is instead of buying three bags, they might just buy one bag, but they'll still buy it," he said.

Over at Pook Toque, Gregg Blackler was selling mitts, sock monkeys and hats that can be worn 50 ways.

"It's been a slower year for all crafters," he said, "but

hats and mitts are staples."

Ottawa is a good market for the hats because "it's cold," he said.

Jewelry designer Marlene Goodman doesn't think the recession will affect her.

The owner of Simplicity, Goodman said 34 years in the business have gotten her some very loyal customers in Ottawa.

When it comes to investing in serious pieces, people are still willing to pay the price, she said.

The show, which features more than 200 artists, was expected to attract 30,000 people over 10 days, but it remains to be seen whether the transit strike will affect attendance.

Some of the shipments of goods brought in for sale were already delayed due to traffic, Law said.

## Ottawa's crime rate falls in '07

**TRACEY TONG**  
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

**Criminal activity in Ottawa went down six per cent in 2007, with 17 of the city's 23 wards reporting fewer crimes than the year before.**

Still, assaults, which accounted for 70 per cent of all violent crimes last year, grew by two per cent, or a rate of 425 incidents per 100,000 residents, after a decline in 2006, said Ottawa police in a report on crime stats by ward released Thursday.

While the citywide increase remains small, more than half of the city wards — 57 per cent — show rising levels of violent crime in 2007.

After falling nearly seven per cent in 2006, crimes against the person, including assaults, uttering threats and intimidation, rose by 64 incidents, or one per cent, in 2007.

Even so, a Statistics Canada report released earlier this year shows Ottawa has the lowest rate of violent crime out of Canada's major cities in 2007.

The police report, which lists Criminal Code offences

by type for Ottawa's 23 wards, showed the total number of offences fell six per cent, or 3,000 incidents, citywide in 2007. The overall crime rate declined to 5,013 offences per 100,000 residents.

While 19 of 23 wards reported fewer robberies, incidents rose slightly in Cumberland, Stittsville-Kanata West, Kanata North and Kitchissippi.

The number of break-and-enters declined 18 per cent from 2006, and dangerous operation of motor-vehicle offences dropped 17 per cent, but mischief-related offences rose by two per cent in 2007 to 944 incidents per 100,000 residents.

With a 28 per cent decline in mischief, Orléans had the most significant drop in the city.

"The data in this report helps the Ottawa police and the community to further identify problem areas," said Police Chief Vern White in a news release.

The report can also help "Ottawa residents and visitors can gain a better understanding of crime in the city," he added.

The full report is available at [www.ottawapolice.ca](http://www.ottawapolice.ca).

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### Lotteries



Ontario Pick 3: 1 2 6; Ontario Pick 4: 7 1 1 7  
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Daily Keno: 5, 8, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22, 27, 28, 29, 36, 39, 43, 45, 51, 59, 62, 63, 65, 67

Payday: 11, 20, 27 & 41

These results are not official.

### News in brief

**THEFT** Police are asking for the public's assistance in recovering an invaluable ceremonial eagle feather stolen from a vehicle in Ottawa's west end earlier this week. Between Dec. 8 and 10, a ceremonial eagle feather was stolen from the owner's vehicle parked at the

1300 block of Carling Avenue. The feather was kept inside a green case 8x10 inches, one inch thick, in a duffel bag. Anyone with information is asked to call police at 613-236-1222, ext. 2266 or Crime stoppers at 613-233-8477.

**TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA**

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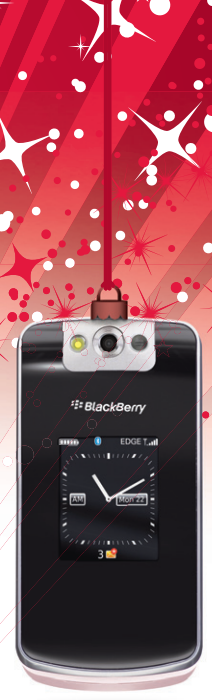
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Tree lighting ceremony today

Wallis House hosts the annual lighting for one of Ottawa's tallest living trees at 589 Rideau St. at 5:30 p.m. Friday. METRO OTTAWA

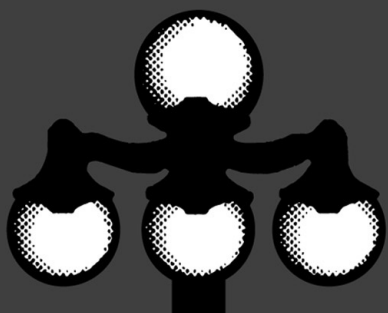
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## Youth-driven change

TIM WIECLAWSKI  
 tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

**When Caleb Timmermann returns from Poland on Tuesday, he'll be bringing more than just souvenir T-shirts and photographs.**

After spending nearly two weeks as a youth delegate at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Poznan, the Grade 12 Canterbury High School student is bringing home the message that people need to push Canada back to the forefront in the fight against climate change.

"Having this experience has taught me so much," the 17-year-old Ottawa resident said in a phone interview from Poland yesterday.

"We can all make a difference. We need to pressure the governments, take initiatives on our own to reduce personal emissions and generally get more involved," he said.



Caleb Timmermann, from left, discusses youth involvement in environmental policy with Michael Martin and Jim Prentice in a meeting during the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

"Canada has been known as a leader in the past for things like this. Sadly at the moment, we're lagging behind."

Along with Taryn McKenzie-Mohr from Fredericton High School in New Brunswick, Timmermann joined 500 students from around the world as youth delegates to the convention.

Yesterday, the two sat

down with Environment Minister Jim Prentice to discuss Canada's emissions targets and youth involvement in environmental policy.

"He was open to suggestions about changing Canada's emissions targets," said Timmermann.

The two-week international conference is intended to set the global agenda on climate change.

### City vacancy rate hits six-year low

**APARTMENTS** The number of empty apartment units in Ottawa is at its lowest point in six years.

According the fall 2008 rental market report from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., Ottawa's vacancy rate for apartments fell to 1.4 per cent from 2.4 per cent the year before.

Strong youth employment, increased migration and rising home prices are to combined to tighten the rental market this year, according to Sandra Pérez Torres, CMHC senior market analyst for the Ottawa area. Vacancy rates are expected to get even lower in 2009 due to slow apartment construction next year.

METRO OTTAWA

## 'Tis the season to acquire tax credits

TIM WIECLAWSKI  
 tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

**CHARITIES** While the seasonal bump in charitable donations can be attributed to holiday goodwill, the allure of tax credits is getting Ottawans to open their wallets as well.

Although CHEO Foundation vice-president, community development Norma Lamont said "there is no question that there is that feeling of giving during the holidays," she added charities like the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario also have a looming tax credit deadline to thank for donations.

"Taxes are based on the calendar year, so if you don't have your donations in by the end of Dec. 31, you're not eligible for a charitable tax receipt," she said.

According to a new survey conducted by TD Bank Financial Group for the Children's Miracle Network, tax credits ranked as the most influential top factor when making charitable donations, with 45 per cent of respondents indicating that they would give more if they got more back.

"We were quite surprised to see tax credits come out on top," said Matthew Cram, a spokesman for TD Bank Financial Group. "Not-for-profits need to recognize that Canadians do want to give, but sometimes it would help if they got something else in return."

TD Canada Trust is running a campaign in support of the Children's Miracle Network where customers can donate to local children's hospitals direct from their bank accounts.

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The Supreme Court has ruled, in a decision without comment, that it would not review Karlheinz Schreiber's latest bid to block his extradition from Canada. Schreiber will not be extradited until he has participated in a public inquiry regarding his dealings with Brian Mulroney. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

# Canada



## Christmas tree or holiday tree?

The first test for Quebec Premier Jean Charest came just days after winning Monday's election — what to call the tree erected on the lawn of the legislature. A Tuesday news release announced the premier would "light the Christmas tree" the next day, but was corrected to "holiday tree" within minutes. The province later said the second release was sent in error and that the tree is, in fact, a Christmas tree.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

# Ottawa broke law on EI: Court

Decides fees were unlawfully turned into a 'payroll tax' for three years

**The federal government collected employment insurance premiums "unlawfully" for three years, the Supreme Court of Canada said in a decision that raises questions about what will happen to the money paid into government coffers by employers and employees during that time.**

In a 7-0 judgment, the court rejected arguments by two Quebec unions that the former Liberal government under then-prime ministers Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin had deliberately racked up huge employment insurance surpluses and then diverted them to help balance the federal budget.

**"Canadian employers and employees can be confident that any future revenues raised from EI premiums will go exclusively towards paying benefits."**

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

But the court found that EI premiums in 2002, 2003 and 2005 had been collected "unlawfully, without the necessary legislative authorization" from Parliament. That's because the federal cabinet was given the discretion to set the rates, without the criteria that had previously been used to guide those decisions.

Employment insurance was effectively transformed from a regulatory scheme

into "a payroll tax," Justice Louise LeBel wrote for the unanimous court. Invoking "the ancient, but fundamental, principle of our democratic system that there should be no taxation without representation," he said it was not clear that Parliament had intended to delegate its taxing authority, making the collection of EI premiums in those years illegal.

The court also affirmed

the federal government's authority to take an "active role" by offering job programs within the employment insurance system.

The effect of the ruling is unclear. The court suspended the legal effects of its judgment for 12 months. But it did not order that any of the money be repaid, as the unions had asked, and did not tell the government how to remedy the situation.

"We are analyzing the decision related to the means by which the EI premium rate was set for 2002, 2003 and 2005 and its implications to develop a solution that respects the Supreme Court decision," said a state-

ment from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

"Canadian employers and employees can be confident that any future revenues raised from EI premiums will go exclusively towards paying benefits and reducing EI premiums," the statement added.

Labour groups have long complained that the federal government collects far more than it needs to finance the EI system. Federal auditor general Sheila Fraser has also raised concerns about the substantial surplus.

As of March 31, 2007, the EI surplus was \$54.1 billion.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

New Liberal leader, lack of party cash means Tories likely to stay in power

**ANALYSIS** Although Canadian opposition parties are still furious with the minority Conservative government, they now seem less likely to bring down Prime Minister Stephen Harper over the budget in January.

Both sides realize there are major threats to pushing the conflict any further so soon after the Oct. 14 election that gave Harper a stronger grip on power.

If Harper continues to antagonize his opponents, they will bring down the government and leave the decision on what to do next to Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean.

The battles have generated public and media contempt, especially among those who feel Harper sparked the crisis by delivering a provocative fiscal update two weeks ago.

"If he can come forward with a budget that serves the national interest of our country, there might be something to talk about here," Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff recently told the CBC.

The Liberals are demanding the budget contain a major stimulus package to help the economy, something Harper has made clear he will deliver on. Harper called Ignatieff on Wednesday and said he was ready to meet him.

Despite Ignatieff's apparent willingness to work with Harper, the party is also indebted and has an inefficient fund-raising arm.

This all suggests that the Liberals will find a way to either back Harper's budget or not to bring him down over it.

REUTERS

## New Senate appointments may open door for Tory

**ONTARIO** The prime minister's plan to fill 18 Senate vacancies could be the helping hand Progressive Conservative Leader John Tory needs to find a long-sought seat in the legislature.

With the clock ticking down to Tory's self-imposed Dec. 31 deadline to find a vacant riding that he can contest in a byelection, attention is centred on the possibility a Progressive Conservative MPP could be offered a Senate seat by Stephen Harper.

Tory called that "speculative" yesterday and said he hadn't been asked to submit any possible names.

Observers said the most likely Senate candidate would be veteran Progressive Conservative MPP Bob Runciman, a former cabinet minister and supporter of an elected Senate who is from the party's right wing.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

## British Columbia Great gondola



A gondola lift carries skiers on the Peak 2 Peak pass between Whistler and Blackcomb mountains in Whistler, B.C., yesterday. At 3,024 metres, the Peak 2 Peak has four support towers and is the world's longest unsupported span. Whistler will be the site of the alpine and nordic events of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The gondola officially opens today.

ANDY CLARK/REUTERS

## News in brief

**HEALTH** A review of thousands of cases handled by Dr. Rajgopal Menon reinforced the magnitude of the errors in the disgraced pathologist's work, the New Brunswick legislature heard Thursday. CBC News Online reports Gamma-Dynacare

Medical Laboratories re-examine roughly 23,000 tests conducted at the Miramichi Regional and Edmundston Regional Hospitals, finding 5,286 of the cases reviewed were completely or partially misdiagnosed.

**DEPORTED** Steven Andrews Hayes, 49, a U.S. fugitive sex offender has been ordered deported from Canada, after he was discovered working under an alias on a Calgary construction site. Hayes is wanted in Texas on charges of aggravated

sexual assault of a child, CBC News Online reports. He was profiled on America's Most Wanted and had been on the run since 2005. Calgary police arrested him Tuesday after a tip from U.S. marshals.

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Trevor Greene and fiancée Debbie Lepore shown outside their hotel in Vancouver on Thursday. Greene had his head split open during an axe attack while serving in Afghanistan. A documentary following the pair during Greene's recovery is set to air Friday and Saturday on CTV.

## Warrior of peace

JEFF HODSON  
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

**The past 2½ years have been a "marathon of baby steps" for a Vancouver army reservist whose brain was split by an axe in a horrific attack in Afghanistan.**

Capt. Trevor Greene said he's never been a patient man and the agonizing slowness of his progress has been the most difficult part of his recovery.

"It's like being frozen in an iceberg and slowly thawing out," said Greene, originally from Cape Breton, at a hotel in Vancouver on Thursday.

In March 2006, Greene, a journalist and author, was a co-operation officer in a platoon of Canadian soldiers operating near Kandahar.

During a meeting with village elders, a youth ran up behind Greene and plunged an axe deep into his skull. Greene had taken off his helmet and the axe cleaved his brain in half.

Greene's recovery is the subject of a documentary, *Peace Warrior*, which airs tomorrow night (and repeats Sunday) on CTV.

The documentary, by North Vancouver's Sue Ridout, follows Greene, his fiancée Debbie Lepore and their three-year-old daughter Grace for 18 months as the family moves from an extended-care facility in B.C. to a brain injury centre in Alberta and finally to their new home in Nanaimo.

The pair plan to marry in July 2010.

"It'll be three years in March and we're looking good," said Lepore, who gave up her career as a chartered accountant to care for her fiancé. "I'm very, very happy with what he has accomplished so far."

Greene, who is alert and has limited movement, said his goal is to walk and one-day hopes to accompany his daughter down the aisle at her wedding.

## Airports infiltrated by organized crime: RCMP

**CRIME** There are 38 organized-crime groups with members or associates working at Toronto's Pearson International Airport, according to an RCMP study of smuggling at Canadian airports.

The groups smuggle humans, cocaine, marijuana and a stimulant called "khat" that predates the use of coffee, but is relatively new on Canadian streets, according to the RCMP study, called Project Spawn.

The study examined criminal cases between January 2005 and August 2007 in the airports of Toronto,

Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal (Trudeau International Airport) and Halifax.

It noted that 1,326 people were involved in organized criminal activity at the airports, including 298 airport employees.

"The facilities are susceptible to criminal exploitation and infiltration, particularly at the major international airports that receive frequent flights from either source countries or transit countries for various types of contraband," the report states.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

## U.S. wants Canada to stay past '11

**AFGHANISTAN** U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert Gates alluded Thursday that he would like to see Canada extend its mission in Afghanistan beyond its scheduled 2011 departure date.

Gates praised Canada's work in Afghanistan and said he would be disappointed to see Canadians leave.

"They have been outstanding partners for us. And all I can tell you, as has been the case for a very long time: The longer we can have Canadian soldiers as partners, the better it is," he said.

Robert Gates on Afghanistan

REUTERS

### News in brief

**SCIENCE** A small paper in North America's most prestigious scientific journal is sending a stampede of controversy through the zoo world by suggesting captive elephants are doomed to live shorter lives than their wild counterparts. Zoo elephants are living truncated lives, as little as one-third the lifespan of pachyderms in protected preserves, says the study, which was co-authored by a top University of Guelph veterinarian. The paper, which looked at 4,500 elephants, appeared this week in the journal *Science*. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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# World



## Obama eyeing climate deal

The U.S. Senate will let president-elect Barack Obama, left, sign a UN pact to fight global warming in late 2009 even if U.S. climate laws are not yet in place, U.S. Senator John Kerry predicted yesterday. But Kerry, designated head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on the sidelines of UN climate talks in Poland that China, India and Russia would also have to promise to cut greenhouse-gas emissions to win Senate blessing of any pact.

**REUTERS**

# Suicide bomber kills 50 in Iraq

Crowded restaurant in disputed city of Kirkuk site of latest violence

**A suicide bomber killed about 50 people and wounded more than 100 yesterday, including Kurdish and Arab officials, in a crowded restaurant near Iraq's ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk.**

The bomber detonated explosives inside the restaurant, shattering the calm of a major Muslim holiday, and killing at least one official from Iraqi President Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, who was eating there with other politicians after a meeting to discuss Kurdish-Arab tensions.

Police said the restaurant north of Kirkuk, a city disputed by ethnic Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen, was packed during lunch hour. The cavernous restaurant's floor was left littered with broken glass and spotted with blood, and plates of food and soda cans were abandoned on tables.

Brig-Gen. Sarhat Qader, a local police official, put the toll at 50 dead and 109 wounded. A U.S. military statement said 45 were killed and 93 wounded.

It appeared to be the worst attack in Iraq since 63 people were killed by a

## U.S. troops

- Iraq will need a U.S. troop presence to help build up its military forces past the newly agreed to three-year deadline for the withdrawal of American soldiers, a senior Iraqi official said.

truck bomb in Baghdad on June 17.

Violence has dropped sharply in recent months after more than five years of sectarian bloodshed and insurgency unleashed by the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. Iraqis have begun to venture out and resume normal life in areas where security is returning, but militants still stage regular attacks in volatile areas. Kirkuk has been one of the less violent cities.

Suicide bombings are generally attributed to Sunni Islamist al-Qaida.

The blast, in a well-known restaurant frequented by Kirkuk dignitaries, shook Iraq as Muslims celebrated Eid al-Adha, a four-day religious holiday.

Many people are off work and would be more likely to visit restaurants.

**REUTERS**



Iraqi policemen rush a child wounded in a bomb attack Thursday into a hospital in Kirkuk, 250 kilometres north of Baghdad. A suicide bomber killed about 50 people and more than 100 yesterday in a crowded restaurant near Iraq's ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk, police said.

ANOO ASHED/REUTERS

## U.S. teen marijuana use stalls

**STUDY** Recent declines in marijuana use by U.S. teens appear to have stalled this year and their abuse of prescription drugs remains at worrisome levels, researchers said.

The annual survey of U.S. teen drug use, conducted by University of Michigan researchers for the U.S. government, also found continuing declines in cigarette smoking and alcohol use.

Marijuana is the most commonly used of the illicit drugs and its use had been in a slow but steady decrease this decade, but that appeared to halt this year, researchers said.

The survey found that marijuana use by students in two of the three grades measured increased slightly. But the annual survey has shown an overall downward trend in teen drug use this decade, and President George W. Bush, in comments at the White House, cited progress on the issue during his presidency.

The survey showed a persistent worrisome rate of abuse of prescription medications, including the powerful painkillers Vicodin and Oxycontin, with little change in the past six years.

**REUTERS**

## EU close to climate, stimulus plan

**ENVIRONMENT** European leaders moved towards agreement on a multibillion-dollar program to tackle economic recession and a climate change plan amended to limit impact on struggling industries.

Green groups warned that the European Union's credibility as a force in tackling climate change would be endangered if it accepted too many changes to a plan to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent by 2020.

One British group said

compromises in EU climate policy, which will be key to world talks next year to produce a successor to the Kyoto pact on climate change, amounted to a "meltdown."

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who has threatened to veto a deal without concessions to protect key industries, emerged from the first day of a two-day EU summit, declaring: "We are heading towards a compromise ... We are getting what we want."

**REUTERS**

## 4,000 Greek students march in protest

**VIOLENCE** Protesters hurled fire bombs at riot police, who answered with tear gas, as 4,000 Greek students marched yesterday in a sixth straight day of anti-government violence.

Riots across Greece, triggered by the police shooting of a teenager but fuelled by deep popular anger over corruption and economic hardship, have shaken the conservative government.

"Down with the government of murderers," read

**"The government has shown it cannot handle this. If police start imposing the law, everyone will say the military junta is back."**

Yannis Kalaitzakis

demonstrators' banners. Marchers chanted "Cops, Pigs, Murderers!" in the latest spasm of Greece's worst unrest since the aftermath of its 1967-74 military rule.

Helicopters hovered overhead as the protesters set fire to piles of garbage

in the middle of deserted Athens avenues.

The violence was less intense then in previous days, but more protests were planned for Friday and Monday and some Greeks asked how much longer the government could remain in power.

"The government has shown it cannot handle this. If police start imposing the law, everyone will say the military junta is back," said Yannis Kalaitzakis, 49, an electrician.

"The government is stuck between a rock and a hard place."

Earlier in the day, gangs of Greek high school students hurled stones and fire bombs at police stations in Athens suburbs.

**REUTERS**



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# Illinois debt sale halted by charges

**Corruption charges filed against Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich forced the delay of a \$1.4-billion US debt sale needed to keep the state's nursing homes open, state troopers' cars fueled and prisoners fed, officials said.**

Without money from the debt sale, the state was

facing a record unpaid bill backlog nearing \$4 billion. On Tuesday, the governor and his chief of staff John Harris were charged with corruption by federal prosecutors.

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, who must approve the deal before it goes through, said she was

**Ratings hit**

- The state's woes led Standard & Poor's Ratings Services to put Illinois' AA general obligation rating on review for a possible downgrade.

reviewing whether she can tell investors there is no

pending or actual litigation that could affect the debt, or any controversy concerning the governor's ability to hold office.

A spokeswoman for State Treasurer Alexi Giannoulas said the attorney general's concerns held up the sale. The competitive sale, which was postponed

until Tuesday, had been generating interest from potential bidders in the municipal bond market.

Illinois comptroller Dan Hynes warned last month that if the state failed to address the record-high backlog in its bills, creditors could curtail services.

REUTERS

## Brazil unveils \$3.6 billion in tax breaks

**BRASILIA** Brazil announced tax breaks worth 8.4 billion reais (\$3.6 billion US) designed to boost demand and stem a slowing economy, but which could undermine its fiscal strength.

The government will cut industrial taxes on cars and reduce taxes on consumer loans to help an ailing automobile industry and bolster consumer demand, authorities said.

It will cut income taxes by as much as 54 per cent on lower and middle salary brackets. Also, the central bank will use international reserves to extend loans to Brazilian companies with foreign debt maturing in 2009.

Total loans could exceed \$10 billion.

REUTERS

## Venezuela indicts opposition leader

**CHARGES** Venezuela indicted opposition leader Manuel Rosales on corruption charges, possibly weakening adversaries of President Hugo Chavez as he seeks to deepen his self-styled revolution.

The indictment, which had been expected, came after the government this year blocked several oppo-

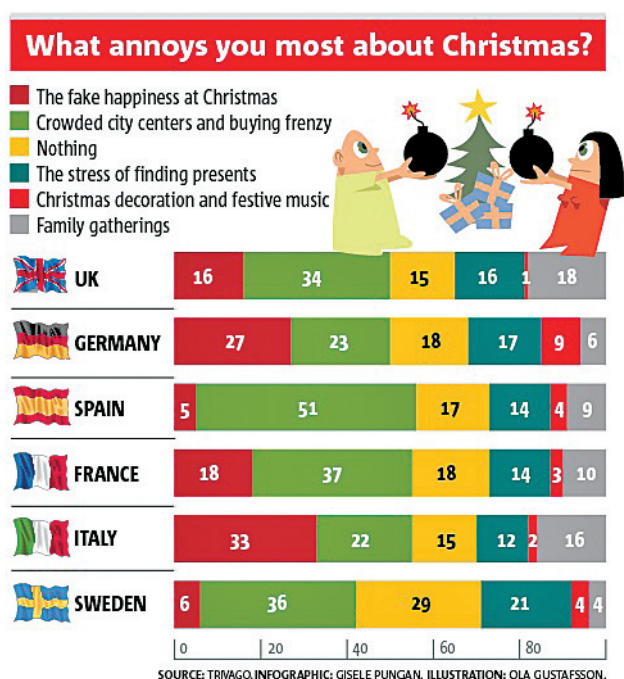
sition politicians from running for office, sparking criticism that Chavez was using the state to silence his political enemies.

The indictment opens the possibility that Rosales could be unable to run for president in the 2012 election. Chavez is opening a campaign for a constitutional amendment allow-

ing him to stay in office after his current term ends.

The state prosecutor's office said the charges of "illicit enrichment," punishable by three to 10 years in prison, were based on a government investigation of Rosales' assets in which he was unable to explain the origin of certain funds.

REUTERS



### News in brief

**CARACAS** A power outage struck parts of the Venezuelan capital yesterday, the latest in a series of major blackouts. The outage hit during rush hour in the metropolitan area of about

five million people. Experts say Venezuela has skimped on billions of dollars in electrical investments.

**RUSSIA** Alexey Belyayev-Gintovt won the main Kandin-

sky art prize, worth 40,000 euros, for his Motherland-Daughter paintings. The works' politically critical nature prompted some gala hecklers to label him a "fascist."

REUTERS

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# Comment & Views

## Comment

# Tiring of the spectacle?

## OmniVision



rick.mcginis@metronews.ca

We can only imagine what was said to Bob Rae in the 24-hour period between last Monday and Tuesday to convince him to concede the fight for leader of the Liberal Party of Canada to his old college roommate Michael Ignatieff. Whatever it was, it must have been a compelling enough argument — or attractive enough offer — to breach Rae's apparently adamant opposition and forthright ego.

When the week began, Rae was insisting that "most people believe it's better to have a contest, it's better to have a choice." A day later, he was all resignation and curt practicality: "It's not

the end of the world here, folks," he told the Toronto Star. "I mean, a decision had to be made."

"You have to be realistic about these things," he said, with the verbal equivalent of a wince. "It's just politics."

Politics is what we're seeing a lot of this season, as the howling rhetoric and convulsions of two election campaigns on either side of the border seems to have infused the customary torpor of Canadian Parliament with an intemperate combativeness that rarely emerges more than once or twice a century.

Unaccustomed as we all are to the demands of this spectacle, it remains to be seen whether our politicians have the stamina to keep going — or whether the

Canadian people have the patience to pay attention.

Call it what you want — and I like to call it a coup within an attempted coup — but it's hard to deny that the surprisingly brisk leadership shuffle the Liberals have undertaken this week is an acknowledgement that their assault on Stephen Harper's minority government might not be powered by fully charged batteries.

Even after stepping aside for Ignatieff, Rae insisted that he would still have been up for a leadership battle if the party had decided to go to its members, instead of consulting the "77 MPs and 58 senators of caucus, defeated candidates from the October election and the presidents of

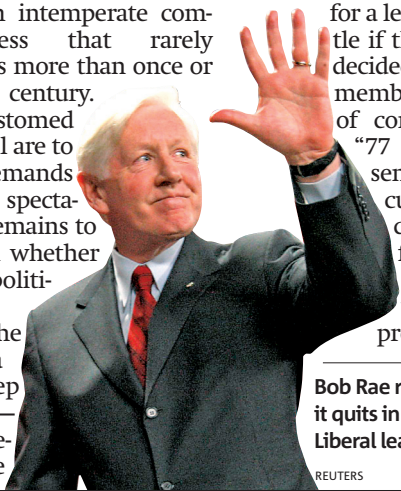
riding associations and commission clubs" the Star called the "Liberal elite."

Consulting the party's own bylaws, choosing alternative delegates from electoral district associations requires a candidate "(i) is a youth, if there are not six youth delegates from that EDA; (ii) is an aboriginal person, if there are not two aboriginal delegates from that EDA; (iii) is a woman, if there are not 10 delegates from that EDA who are women; (iv) is a man, if there are not ten delegates from that EDA who are men; (v) is a senior, if there are not two delegates from that EDA who are seniors." You almost can't blame them for defaulting to the backroom everyone thinks runs the Liberal party.

Rae's right; whatever this is — and it's certainly nothing like democracy, perish the thought — it's just politics, God help us all.

Bob Rae recently called it quits in his bid for the Liberal leadership.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.



REUTERS

## Views

# Civility lives during strike, despite a few jerks

## UrbanCompass



Welcome to Day 3 of your transit strike. Never mind the apocalyptic headlines. Looting and cannibalism remain under control.

The economy's wheezing, the weather's heartless, and we didn't need this extra kick in the slats, but we're handling it.

Ottawa is home to some virtuoso complainers, but we've also got a dogged, no-drama, get-on-with-it side, with cranky endurance to spare. If we didn't, we would have given up the ghost en masse last Febru-

ary. Or most Februaries.

Toronto, I think I can say without undue prejudice to our dear GTA sisters and brothers, would be wetting its civic britches right about now.

Remember the Great TTC Strike of '08? Drivers struck on Friday night, and were legislated back to work over the weekend. (Innes Coun. Rainer Bloess was quick to call on the federal government for similar medicine, but Parliament, of course, is experiencing its own work stoppage.)

We're in for a rougher ride, or lack thereof.

I wouldn't advise crying to a Montrealer, though, as we face our third transit strike in 30 years. They've had at least 10 in the same time period.

How long will this one

last? Your guess is as good as mine, and my guess is about three weeks. The last strike, in '96, took 24 days. The one before that, in '79, went 20.

That's as much as I know. This one could last days or months. Vancouver was stranded for four months in '01.

Meanwhile, we're late, we're grumpy, and we're stiff from shovelling, but we're stuck in it together and conducting ourselves accordingly.

There are inevitable exceptions, like one jerk who gunned it through a red light at Bronson and Somerset on Wednesday evening, mercifully flattening none of the pedestrians massed at the intersection.

Or how about our friends at Impark, who on the first day of the strike cancelled

the early bird rates at their parking lots? Classy.

But for the most part, the horn-honking is sporadic, as most drivers remember that applying their brakes is usually more effective.

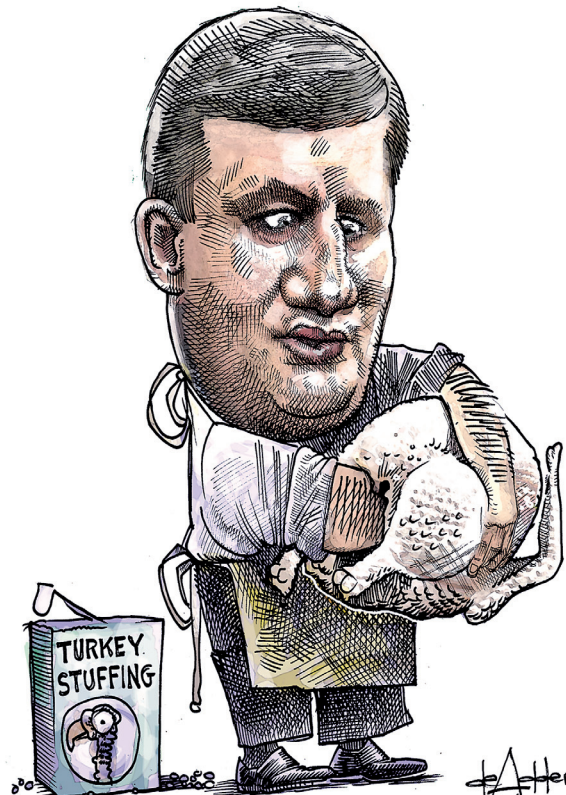
The traffic is thick and slow, but so far we're getting where we're going without many detours to the emergency room.

Para Transpo keeps on busing, and Public Works managed to get the structurally dubious Chaudiere Bridge (slightly) open.

Civility lives as walkers share the too-narrow sidewalks or sink-slide together through the snowbanks where sidewalks used to be. A snotty-mittened thumbs-up to you all.

Steve Collins lives, writes and walks in Ottawa.

## HARPER TO STUFF THE SENATE:



MICHAEL DE ADER

## Letters

### Downtown business affected by transportation strike

I find it in very poor taste that the city and the union could not come to an agreement.

Not only will we be forced to either pay extremely high taxi fares or to use underground cabs, but our livelihoods may be affected. I work in a downtown business, and on Day 1 of the strike, we have already had two people cancel appointments, citing the strike as the reason they cannot come in.

I encourage all transit users to either boycott bus service when it starts up, or to refuse pay. If the union and the city feels that what they are both doing is justified, then I feel not paying for a service that is obviously broken is justified.

JAY PROVENCAL, OTTAWA

### Deeply opposed to columnist's statements

RE: View — "How the coalition propelled Harper in polls" by Ezra Levant (Dec 9) "Polls showing that Canadians deeply oppose the coalition ..." "Harper has skyrocketed to his highest

level of supporters yet ..." Wait a second, have I missed something? I remember Canada was deeply divided about the coalition. And by my understanding, Harper was not too popular in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario last week.

I am saddened to find such a right-wing column in my Metro (Mr. Levant is a Conservative party activist) and I find it only has a place in the paper if the paper offers the same space to a different view.

MELANY GAUVIN, OTTAWA

### Measure twice, cut once

RE: Comment — "Let's retire the queen" by Paul Sullivan (Dec 10)

Why is it bad to have one more step before a final decision? "Measure twice, cut once" as say Canadians. What a mess we'd have with this fast-made coalition if not for the intervention of the Governor General.

Now we have a cooling period for Harper to think twice on how to behave in a minority, and for the Opposition to choose the new stronger leader.

BORIS FOURSENKO, RICHMOND HILL, ONT

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Visa Inc. chief executive Joseph Saunders was without his own plastic when he lost his wallet en route to a New York conference from San Francisco yesterday. "It's rather embarrassing when someone steals my credit cards," he said. **REUTERS**

# Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

DOLLAR	
	
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## \$34.8B BCE deal dead

### Fight begins over \$1.2-billion breakup fee

The \$34.8-billion leveraged buyout of BCE Inc. ended in collapse yesterday, setting the stage for a fight between the company and its buyers over the deal's \$1.2-billion breakup fee.

The derailment was widely expected after BCE said late last month that its accountants, KPMG, had concluded that the company that would emerge from the buyout would fail a solvency test because of its huge debt load.

The purchase required a positive solvency ruling from KPMG as a condition for closing, which was slated for Thursday. KPMG did not deliver a positive opinion, leading the deal to fail.

BCE confirmed the buyout would not proceed and said it would demand a

**"It is most unfortunate that BCE is threatening litigation over the failure of a mutual closing condition ... Should BCE commence such baseless litigation, we are confident that it would not succeed."**

Would-be BCE buyers group

\$1.2-billion breakup fee from the buyers, a group of private-equity firms led by the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. The buyers prematurely delivered their notice to terminate, Montreal-based BCE said.

The buyers, meanwhile, said it was "very clear" that neither party owes a termination fee to the other.

"It is most unfortunate that BCE is threatening litigation over the failure of a mutual closing condition that the company insisted be included in the original

acquisition agreement," the buyers said in a statement.

"Should BCE commence such baseless litigation, we are confident that it would not succeed."

The conflicting views on the break fee set the stage for a fight that could either end up in court or result in a settlement, said Troy Crandall, an analyst at MacDougall, MacDougall & MacTier.

About 18 months ago, BCE struck an agreement to be bought by Teachers,

along with U.S.-based private equity firms Providence Equity Partners, Madison Dearborn Partners and Merrill Lynch Global Private Equity, at \$42.75 a share in cash, and be taken private.

However, the stock has traded around \$23 on the Toronto Stock Exchange of late, a sign of investor doubt about the buyout. KPMG's opinion on solvency added to investor concerns that the deal would be delayed, repriced or ultimately abandoned because of tight capital markets.

The market widely expected the deal's collapse, but BCE shares still fell on the TSX, shedding nearly 6 per cent before rebounding to \$22.43, for a loss of 59 cents or 2.6 per cent.

**REUTERS**

### Pawning Growth in a recession?



Jordan Tabach-Bank, CEO of Beverly Loan Company, displays some of the valuables his clients have traded in for cash at his upscale Beverly Hills, Calif., pawn shop. Pawn-shop owners are seeing strong business across the U.S., even in such unexpected locales as Beverly Hills, the mecca of luxurious living and shopping.

## Food hot, trendy yoga clothing not

**STOCKS** Retailers Lululemon Athletica Inc. and Empire Co. both showed big profit growth in their latest quarterly results Friday, but while markets warmed to Empire and its essential food products, it was defi-

nately cool on Lululemon, a yoga-inspired clothier that could suffer as consumer spending wanes.

Empire, owner of Sobies, earned \$65.7 million in its second quarter, up 12.5 per cent from

\$58.4 million in the same period last year. Its shares rose 0.5 per cent to \$47.25.

Meanwhile, Lululemon shares tumbled more than 23 per cent after it posted an \$8.8 million profit, 16 per cent higher. **REUTERS**

### Business in brief

**MARKETS** World stocks changed little Friday as investors continued to wait for governments to finalize aid packages. Swiss and South Korean central banks cut rates Fri-

day, and the Federal Reserve is expected to do so again next Thursday.

**ACQUISITION** Mexican bread-maker Bimbo's latest acquisi-

tion of George Weston's western U.S. breadmaking unit is being praised as a bold move, but analysts warn about the burden of high interest payments. **REUTERS**

## Oil firms to spend cautiously in 2009

**ENERGY** EnCana Corp. and Petro-Canada moved to cut 2009 capital spending yesterday to cope with falling commodity prices and market turmoil, but they left themselves enough room to change plans quickly in case the economy improves, or worsens.

Petro-Canada said it will cut its 2009 capital budget by 36 per cent, to \$3.96 billion, from the \$6.16 billion it plans to spend this year,

with a cut in production of about 15,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day.

EnCana will cut its spending next year by 18 per cent to about \$6.1 billion US, down from \$7.4 billion this year, as it looks to keep its production flat with 2008 levels.

It also lowered its 2008 target for cash flow by about five per cent, to a range between \$9.4 billion and \$9.6 billion. **REUTERS**

## Wall St. bonuses to drop by half

**PAY** Wall Street's bonuses will fall at least 50 per cent this year, New York's city comptroller said, predicting the pain will not be confined to executives.

Federal regulators want the officers of banks and brokerages that they nearly capsized to forego their bonuses.

Hinting this could move down the pecking order, William Thompson said in a report that Wall Street's pay scale for all workers is not divorced from economic forces. **REUTERS**



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Thirty-eight players have arrived in Ottawa for Canada's world junior hockey selection camp. A morning skate and an evening intrasquad game were scheduled for Friday and Saturday, but just an intrasquad game is on Sunday's agenda. The 22-player team will be named Monday. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

# Sports



**"I really didn't feel wanted from a management standpoint ... There were comments made behind the scenes."**

The Raptors' Jermaine O'Neal, speaking to the Indianapolis Star regarding his former boss, Indiana Pacers president Larry Bird.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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## Conrad fights for national funding

### Nova Scotia snowboarder works for return trip to Olympics in Vancouver

VANCOUVER  
2010 Games

MATTHEW WUEST  
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

**Sarah Conrad isn't sure where her national sponsor money went, but she's ready to fight to get it back.**

The Dartmouth, N.S., snowboarder, who unexpectedly went to the Winter Olympics in Turin in 2006, is encountering a few bumps in the road on

her way to Vancouver 2010.

Turns out the Canadian Olympic Committee's Own The Podium slogan could leave Conrad out in the cold.

"Turin was kind of like, 'Yeah, sweet, you qualified, go and see how you can do,'" Conrad says. "Now, it's like, 'Go and medal or else you're not going at all.' The pressure's on.

"Sometimes, you feel the support, a lot of times, you don't.

"Right now, I'm kind of not feeling the support from big-money sponsors.

"I have to work my butt off and get them back on my side and prove to them I have medal potential."

As she tries to make the cut for Vancouver, Sarah Conrad knows that getting funding in Canada was difficult even before the recession.

The half-pipe rider has rapidly improved since Turin. She posted a number of top-six finishes at major events last season, including a personal-best silver medal at a World Cup event in Stoneham, Que., on her birthday in March.

While that would appear to be enough to guarantee money from big corporate sponsors, Canada's raised bar and the economic climate are working against her.

live as comfortably as I should, but I'll still go. I won't miss a contest because I don't have money."

Helping her cause is sponsorship support from Atlantic Canada. Many smaller corporations have gotten behind Conrad, who was the only Nova Scotian to go to Turin.

"They're still really pumped for me," Conrad says.

Con-

#### On the web

Visit Sarah Conrad's site at [www.sarahconrad.com](http://www.sarahconrad.com).

and World Cups in February and March.

The 23-year-old, who lives in Squamish, B.C., for much of the year, says she can already feel "Olympic fever" building for 2010, and doesn't want to be left out.

She hopes consistent top-six finishes will get her there.

"I feel good about my riding; I feel strong," she says.

"The next year is going to be a trip, but this is what we do. This is our job. I'm going to do my best and see how things end up."

**"Sometimes, you feel the support, a lot of times, you don't. Right now, I'm kind of not feeling the support from big-money sponsors. I have to work my butt off and get them back on my side and prove to them I have medal potential."**

Sarah Conrad



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## sports 19

## NHL Lightning stun Habs



Tampa Bay's Vincent Lecavalier, centre, celebrates his goal with Mark Recchi. The sad-sack Tampa Bay Lightning rose to the occasion and beat the Canadiens 3-1 Thursday night in Montreal.

## Sports in brief

**MLB** Matt Clement has agreed to a minor-league deal with the Toronto Blue Jays, MLB.com reported yesterday. A team official said nothing was official yet, although an announcement was expected Friday. The right-hander hasn't pitched in the major leagues since 2006.

**MLB** The New York Mets acquired relief pitcher J.J. Putz from the Seattle Mariners in a three-team trade that also involves the Cleveland Indians. The deal came only hours after

the Mets officially signed former Angels reliever Francisco Rodriguez, who set the major league record with 62 saves in 2008. It is believed that Putz will serve as the set-up man in a bullpen that will feature an entirely new look in 2009.

**NHL** The Dallas Stars announced Thursday that they have placed veteran defenceman Sergei Zubov on injured reserve, retroactive to November 28, with a hip injury.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

## SCOREBOARD

## NHL

## THURSDAY NIGHT'S RESULTS

Tampa Bay 3 Montreal 1  
Columbus 2 Nashville 1 (SO)  
Philadelphia 6 Carolina 5 (SO)  
Pittsburgh 9 N.Y. Islanders 2  
Florida at Edmonton  
Minnesota at Phoenix  
St. Louis at Los Angeles  
Anaheim at San Jose  
N.Y. Rangers at New Jersey, 7 p.m.

## FRIDAY'S GAMES

**OTTAWA** at Washington, 7 p.m.  
Toronto at Buffalo, 7:30 p.m.  
Boston at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.  
Detroit at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.  
Chicago at Colorado, 9 p.m.  
Florida at Calgary, 9 p.m.

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**FIVE-STAR FRONTAL  
CRASH TEST RATING**

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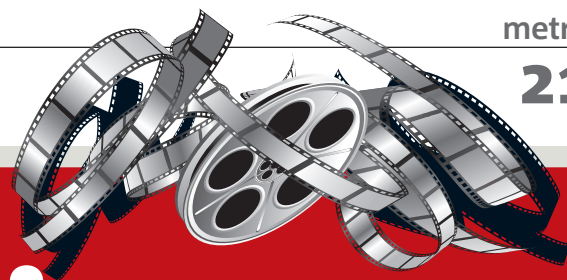
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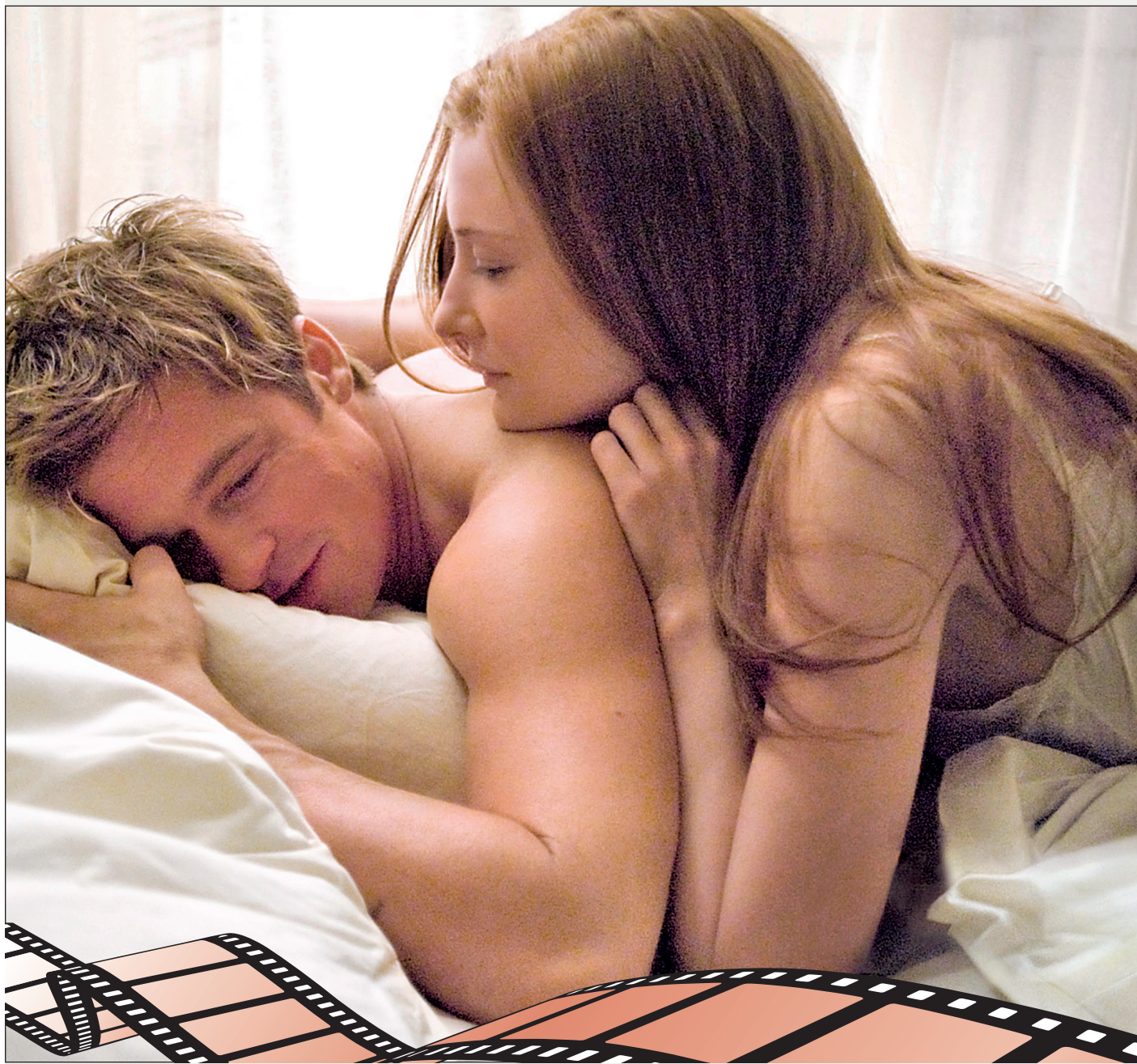
# Movies & Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, [TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA](mailto:TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA)

## Movies

### Just golden

Pg 22



The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett), Frost/Nixon and Doubt led the Golden Globe nominations with five nods each. All the buzz around The Dark Knight fell flat, as the blockbuster only picked up one nomination.

## movies

Pg 22



Sean Penn delivers an utterly truthful performance in Milk.

## music

Pg 32



So what's on Alan Cross' Christmas music playlist?

## 7th heaven

Pg 41



Heath Ledger picking up award nominations.



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## Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

### Milk a good source of film

#### Milk

**Director:** Gus Van Sant  
**Stars:** Sean Penn, Josh Brolin  
**Classification:** 14A  
**Rating:** ●●●●½

**PHIL BROWN**  
 for Metro Canada

**Gus Van Sant's Milk is a project the director has been nurturing for years.**

The movie is about Harvey Milk, the first openly gay politician elected in the U.S. who was tragically murdered by his colleague Dan White.

Sean Penn stars as Milk and delivers the kind of emotionally draining and utterly truthful performance that is expected of him. The same can be said of Josh Brolin, who gives the potentially one-dimensional Dan White a thoroughly believable and complex psychological profile — which shouldn't be particularly surprising given that he just did the same thing with the far more challenging role of George W. Bush.

While Penn and Brolin



**BEST ACTOR NOD:** Sean Penn

are the major standouts, everyone else in the cast — including James Franco, Emile Hirsch and Alison Pill — seem to understand the socio-cultural importance of the film and deliver excellent performances.

Released mere weeks after the now infamous Prop 8 campaign in California, this film about arguably the greatest gay rights activist could not be more timely. It's obviously a very personal issue for Van Sant, who treats the film with the kind of gravitas it deserves and avoids his typical stylistic flights of fancy unless they serve the film in a meaningful way.

Milk might not test the boundaries of narrative filmmaking like the rest of Van Sant's recent work, but it is still an important story told with style and heart that deserves to be seen.

## And the nominees are ...

### Benjamin Button and Frost/Nixon lead the Golden Globes pack

**A variety of films from heart-rending Slumdog Millionaire to tension-filled Frost/Nixon shared the spotlight of Golden Globe nominations yesterday as Hollywood marched toward the Oscars.**

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, about a man who ages backward, and Frost/Nixon, which recounts the interviews of disgraced U.S. President Richard Nixon by British journalist David Frost, each earned five nominations including best film drama to lead the nominees.

"It's a really good morning," Frost/Nixon director Ron Howard told Reuters. "We need this kind of acknowledgment to cut through the clutter" of numerous holiday films.

Benjamin Button and Frost/Nixon were joined in



**THE NOMINEES:** For a complete list of Golden Globe nominees, visit [metronews.ca/entertainment](http://metronews.ca/entertainment).

the race for best movie drama by Slumdog Millionaire, about a poor Indian man competing for love and money on a TV game show, and relationship sagas Revolutionary Road and The Reader.

Doubt, a tale of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, tied Benjamin Button and Frost/Nixon with five nominations, but was shut out of the race for best film drama.

Also excluded from best film races were Milk, with Sean Penn playing slain gay rights activist Harvey Milk, and Batman flick The



The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, starring Brad Pitt, received five Golden Globe nominations yesterday.

Dark Knight. Milk did, however, earn a nomination for Penn as best actor and Dark Knight provided a nomination for the late Heath Ledger in the supporting actor category.

Golden Globe Awards are also handed out for best film musical or comedy and that group of nomi-

nees included Burn After Reading, Happy-Go-Lucky, In Bruges, Mamma Mia! and director Woody Allen's Vicky Cristina Barcelona. The Golden Globes are voted on by roughly 90 members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and given out on Jan. 11.

REUTERS

**TOP CRITICS RAVE**

**TIME** Richard Corliss  
**"ENTHRALLING."**

**The New York Times** Manohla Dargis  
**"...A TESTAMENT TO MOVIE LOVE AT ITS MOST DEVOUT."**

**Chicago Sun-Times** Roger Ebert  
**"EXHILARATING."**

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**Atlantis Rising being adapted**

Writer-director Joby Harold is negotiating to write the adaptation of the comic book Atlantis Rising for DreamWorks. Len Wiseman (Live Free or Die Hard) is expected to direct the apocalyptic science fiction project. **REUTERS**

**Movies**

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

# As the world doesn't turn

## The Day the Earth Stood Still

**Director:** Scott Derrickson  
**Stars:** Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Connelly  
**Classification:** PG  
**Rating:** ●●

**TALIA SOGHOMONIAN**  
 Metro World News

**Back in 1951, the thought of aliens invading the Earth was flippant. The world was still recovering from the Second World War, the Cold War had set in and extraterrestrials were the new Germans.**

Robert Wise's now-classic movie *The Day the Earth Stood Still* carried a timely anti-nuclear message, attempting to stretch the reigning fears of the time; the Cold War was setting in and the Korean War was just around the corner.

Almost 60 years later, in Scott Derrickson's remake, the global situation has changed, this time with an ecological message, the lat-

est point of inspiration for screenwriters being global warming. From the latest Bond flick *Quantum of Solace* to *The Transporter 3*, raising awareness of the "unconventional truth" has been like a light bulb of a bright new idea.

But while Wise's original was an unconventional exercise, Derrickson's version seems clueless, reprising a "city under siege" story with in blockbuster format and some very bland characters.

Jennifer Connelly plays Helen, a microbiologist who is rounded up by the government one night, along with some fellow eggheads, when a giant space object seems headed straight to earth. Instead, it lands in Central Park and it turns out to be a glowing giant marble.

Out of it steps out a human-shaped alien who later morphs into Klaatu (Keanu Reeves), accompanied by an equally cold towering cold metal robot who seems lifted directly from *Metropolis*.



Keanu Reeves stars in the updated version of this sci-fi film.

### On the web

• Visit [metronews.ca/movies](http://metronews.ca/movies) to see trailers for both *Delgo* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.

Klaatu is actually there to warn humanity that it's time to go, given that we're destroying the planet and the universe needs the planet to sustain life. But why warn us that

they're going to destroy us?

*The Day the Earth Stood Still* is only about half the film it could have been. But its cowardly treatment of the political issue at its centre kills it. We don't expect every blockbuster to carry a serious message, but the movie had the potential of *Independence Day* and instead turns out to be just a one-time distraction.

## Delgo better left in bargain bin

### Delgo

**Director:** Marc F. Alder, Jason Maurer  
**Stars:** Freddie Prinze Jr., Jennifer Love Hewitt  
**Classification:** PG  
**Rating:** ●

**PHIL BROWN**  
 for Metro Canada

**REVIEW** Sometimes I wonder if the people who make family films hate children. Sure, there are plenty of children's movies that are wonderful, but for the most part they rank amongst the most boring, clichéd, unfunny movies ever spat onto the screen.

It's as if family filmmakers are convinced that their core audience is so young and stupid that they'll watch anything. Case in point: *Delgo*, an almost incomprehensible film that will be filling clearance bins very soon. This CGI-animated movie is about a mythical land ruled by flying people, reptilian people, goblins, and non-speaking monsters (they all have actual names, but they are dif-

ficult-to-remember nonsense words).

Because of a former evil queen, there is a long-brooding feud between the flying people and the reptilian people which leads to a war that can only be stopped by a plucky reptile boy and an impossibly perfect flying princess, who fall in love and help unite the fighting creatures.

It's all pretty clichéd fantasy storytelling that could have been salvaged by clever writing, impressive animation, or entertaining celebrity-voice casting, but sadly the film boasts none of the above.

*Delgo* was directed and co-written by Marc F. Alder and Jason Maurer. They had never made a film before and it shows. As with all CGI movies, the cast is stacked with recognizable names, all of whom were wasted. Freddie Prinze Jr. and Jennifer Love Hewitt voice the lead characters, while the likes of Malcolm McDowell and Eric Idle phone in supporting roles.

Garbage like *Delgo* should be filling landfills where it belongs.

**"'Nothing Like The Holidays' is a Christmas feast you won't want to miss!"**

—Maria Salas, *TERRA.COM*

**"A treat to watch."**

—Leonard Maltin, *ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT*

**"'Nothing Like The Holidays' is warm, fuzzy and fun."**

—David Sheehan, *HOLLYWOOD CLOSE-UPS*

## Nothing Like The HOLIDAYS



OVERTURE FILMS

PG

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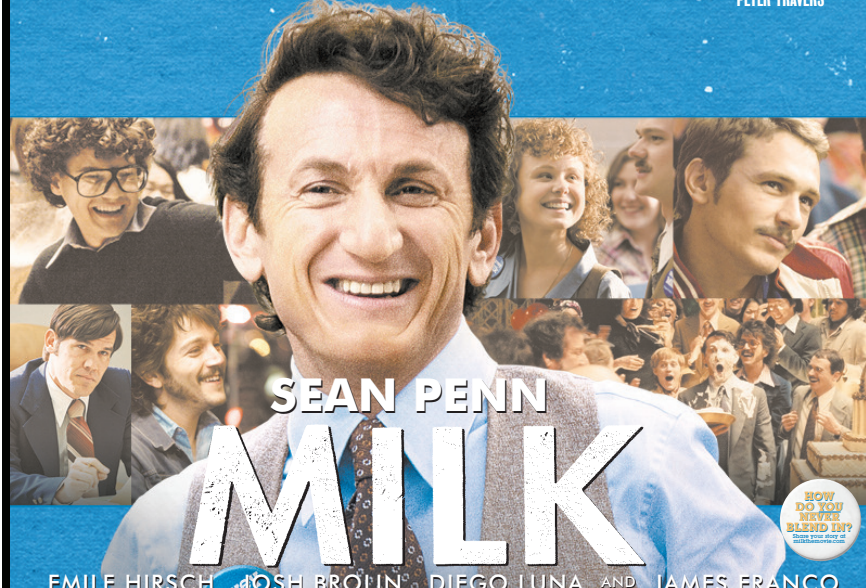
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### Movies

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## Messing minority in new film

**Debra Messing sticks out like a sore thumb in her latest movie, *Nothing Like the Holidays*. But that is just fine by her.**

In the comedy, which debuts in theaters today, a Puerto Rican family comes together at Christmas for the first time in three years, and Messing plays a very non-Latina career-driven executive wife of the family's eldest brother, played by John Leguizamo.

"I'd never been an outsider in a film," Messing said. "I very much felt like the white Jewish girl and it was the first time I had ever been the minority on the set."

Messing tried to "access my inner Latina" by recalling her elementary school Spanish during the shoot, she said.

The 40-year-old Messing said the film marks a step forward in Hollywood because it is essentially a mainstream holiday film but one that focuses on a minority, Latino family.

*Nothing Like the Holidays* follows the Rodriguez family during a holiday gathering in Chicago that is prompted by the youngest brother's return from combat overseas.

An ensemble piece, the movie details the trials of each family member's career or personal relationships. Messing's character,



Debra Messing and John Leguizamo in *Nothing Like the Holidays*.

### Movie feature

Sarah, for instance, struggles with whether to take a new, high-powered job while facing pressure from her husband and mother-in-law to start a family.

"That's not specific to the Puerto Rican culture," Messing said of the themes the movie pursues. "I could see an Italian family on screen, I could see a Jewish family on screen. You could just fill in the blank, because family is family."

Messing, who shot to stardom on eight seasons

of the NBC sitcom *Will & Grace*, said she hoped *Nothing Like the Holidays* would help break down cultural barriers in Hollywood in much the same way *Will & Grace* brought gay characters to mainstream TV audiences in a hit prime-time show.

REUTERS

### On the web

- To read a review of *Nothing Like the Holidays*, and to see a trailer of the film, visit [metronews.ca/movies](http://metronews.ca/movies).

## Introducing Indian culture to the West

### Outsourced

**Director:** John Jeffcoat

**Stars:** Josh Hamilton, Asif Basra, Ayesha Dharker

**Classification:** PG

**Rating:** ●●●●●

BRIAN COULTON  
for Metro Canada

**REVIEW** When one considers a hotdog warmer, giant cheese hat and ceramic bald eagle, what comes to mind? America, of course!

These items, and more patriotic junk, make their mark in the clever new romantic comedy, *Outsourced*, which explores what happens when an American novelty company subcontracts their customer service to India.

Western Novelty employee Todd Anderson (Josh Hamilton) is one of the first to learn that his company will be sending their order fulfillment department eastbound. Left with a decision between

losing his job and training the new Indian branch, detached Anderson picks up and heads off to a country with a culture and lifestyle totally opposite to his own.

Charmingly ignorant of Indian customs, Todd tries to learn the lay of the land while coaching his eastern replacement, Purohit (Asif Basra), whose flexible nature is a stark contrast to Anderson's abrasive management style.

In the process, Todd also begins to fall for alluring call centre worker Asha (Ayesha Dharker) who opens his eyes to India and makes him realize he must abandon the American way for the Indian one, for the value he learns is not in the product but the people.

*Outsourced* uses an objective eye to introduce Indian culture to an American and reflects quite pointedly on stateside self-consumption. The process by which Todd increases his openness and understands the importance of

identification over indoctrination both allows his character to succeed and command the situation mostly forced upon him.

Moving from teaching the Indian team to speak like Americans ("it's Chicaaaah-go" he whines) to rolling with the punches and relocating the group to the roof when the office floods, Todd's growth is quick and comprehensive.

But it's not too fast to pass over the key bits of humour like Todd constantly being robbed by the same child, his anti-ethnic food appetite and the locals referring to him as Mr. Toad.

The comedy of Todd's coming to terms with the landscape is matched by the sparkling way Asha teaches him to let go of preconceptions in labour and love.

Understanding why she acts how she does allows Todd to understand himself better; absorption retained when he must inevitably leave the country he's learned savour.



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Reel Time

⦿⦿⦿⦿⦿ A CLASSIC; ⦿⦿⦿⦿ EXCELLENT; ⦿⦿⦿ GOOD; ⦿⦿ FAIR; ⦿ POOR

Movie morsels

Australia

⦿⦿⦿⦿ **REVIEW** Australia is a beautifully filmed study of a vast land that — as one character says — has “a strange power.” What director Baz Luhrmann should fret over is the drawn-out narrative that plays to melodramatic excess. Set during the outbreak of World War II, Australia features Nicole Kidman as Lady Ashley, widow of a mysteriously murdered cattle ranch owner. When confronted by her husband’s rival with a takeover bid, Ashley hires a maverick stockman (Hugh Jackman) and joins him on a massive cattle drive across the outback.

Steve Gow/for Metro Canada

Bolt

⦿⦿⦿⦿⦿ **REVIEW** Essentially, this tale about the unyielding loyalty of canines is as charming and heart-tugging as any Disney movie out there. Even better, the film excels in skill, depth and maturity

equaling that of Wall-E and Ratatouille. Not really surprising since Pixar’s brilliant chief John Lasseter is now running Disney’s animation department as well.

Steve Gow/for Metro Canada

Four Christmases

⦿⦿⦿⦿ **REVIEW** Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon star as a professional couple who always avoid their families during the holidays. After the film’s worst plot contrivance traps them in the country and broadcasts their availability to their kin, the couple — Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon — embark on their dreaded four Christmases.

Phil Brown/for Metro Canada

Quantum of Solace

⦿⦿⦿⦿ **REVIEW** The movie starts literally minutes after its predecessor, Casino Royale, ended, with a pre-credit car chase that sums up director Marc Forster’s brisk ap-

proach to the story. Action scenes are the meat of Bond movies. Most of what we see in Quantum of Solace is at least as good as the standards set in previous films; relentless, and more than a bit improbable. Daniel Craig’s James Bond is still an excellent incarnation of the character.

Rich McGinnis/Metro Canada

Twilight

⦿⦿⦿ **REVIEW** Kristin Stewart stars as Bella, a young girl who moves to a small town and becomes instantly captivated by a classmate named Edward (Robert Pattinson) who is part of a very peculiar and insular family known as the Cullens. As Bella becomes more attracted to Edward, she discovers that the Cullens are a clan of vampires ... but very safe emo-vampires who only drink animal blood and spend of most of their time silently emoting and looking pretty rather than preying on helpless victims.

Phil Brown/for Metro Canada

Academy Awards’ no nonsense films

InFocus

Richard Crouse

mrchaos33@hotmail.com

f Meryl Streep earns an Academy Award for her performance as the formidable Sister Aloysius Beauvier, a nun who confronts a priest after suspecting him of abusing an African American student in Doubt, she will join a short but prestigious list of actresses who have won gold playing nuns.

The first to win an Oscar for portraying a sister was Jennifer Jones in 1943’s The Song of Bernadette; next Susan Sarandon won for playing Sister Helen Prejean in Dead Man Walking.

Nuns have a long cinematic history and everyone from Ingrid Bergman to Mary Tyler Moore to Eric Idle has donned a habit for dramatic effect. Nuns have flown, sung and even been

shipwrecked with Robert Mitchum on a Pacific Island, but my favorite big screen nun is Sister Assumpta in The Dangerous Lives of Alter Boys.

The title sounds ripped from the headlines, but is actually taken from a 1994 novel by Chris Fuhrman.

Set in the early 1970s, the film revolves around a group of teenage boys obsessed with comic books. Their ringleader, Tim, played by Kieran Culkin, is a prankster who schemes to get revenge on Sister Assumpta, a joyless strict nun with a prosthetic leg played by Jodie Foster.

Learning most of what they know of the world from the superhero adventures written by Stan Lee, they believe there are only two types of people — heroes and villains. Sister Assumpta falls into the latter category and becomes the subject of a “blasphemous” comic book drawn by the boys featuring the evil motorcycle driving Nunzilla.

The guys imagine themselves as the heroes who do battle with Nunzilla’s sis-

terly minions. Once the comic book is discovered the boys are expelled from school assured by Sister Assumpta that not only are they not welcome at school anymore, they likely won’t be welcome in Heaven either.

Foster’s Sister Assumpta spits hellfire in every sentence. She plays the sister as a strict disciplinarian who truly believes she is doing the best to save her students from damnation. Her peg leg is just a physical manifestation of her rigid personality. It’s something different for Foster who pulls it off with aplomb.

For more adventurous viewers there are nunsploitation movies. Sometimes called Convent Erotica, these movies are not for the easily offended and have titles like Killer Nun and Behind the Convent Walls. Watch them, but don’t forget to say ten Hail Marys afterwards.

Richard Crouse is the author of Son of the 100 Best Movies You’ve Never Seen and film critic for CTV’s Canada AM.

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7

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Screen Times

This week's new releases are highlighted in red.

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 12 TO THURS., DEC. 18. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

OTTAWA

**BYTOWNE CINEMA**  
325 Rideau St., 613-789-3456

**Ashes of Time Redux** (14A) Wed-Thu 9:10  
**Outsourced** (PG) Fri 6:55 Sat 4:40-6:55 Sun 2-6:25 Mon 4:30 Tue-Wed 6:55 Thu 4:30  
**Passchendaele** (14A) Wed 4:30 Thu 6:45  
**Patti Smith: Dream of Life** (PG) Fri-Sat 9:10 Sun 8:40 Mon 6:45 Tue 9:10  
**Pi** (STC) Mon 9:05 Tue 4:45  
**Tis Autumn: The Search for Jackie Paris** (PG) Fri 4:45 Sat 2:30 Sun 4:15

**CANADIAN FILM INSTITUTE**  
2 Daly Ave., Suite 120, 613-232-6727

Listings not available at press time.

**CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE**  
240 McLeod St., 613-566-4700

**Great Natural Wonders of the World** (STC) Fri 3 Sat-Sun 11:30-1:30-3:30 Thu 6 Fri 4 Sat-Sun 12:30-2:30-4:30 Thu 7  
**Nature Scopers: Scope Out the World Around Us** (STC) Sat-Sun 9:30-10:30 Sat-Sun 10-11

**COLISEUM OTTAWA**  
3090 Carling Ave., 613-596-9475

**Australia** (PG) Fri-Sun 12:40-4:20-8 Mon-Thu 4:20-8  
**Bolt** (G) Fri-Sun 1:35-5:07-9:25 Mon-Thu 3:50-7-9:25  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still** (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:10 No Passes Mon-Thu 4:30-7:30-10:10 No Passes Fri-Sun 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:10 No Passes Mon-Thu 3:30-6:30-9:10  
**Delgo** (PG) Fri-Sun 1:50-4:25-7:15 Mon-Thu 4:25-7:15  
**Four Christmases** (PG) Fri-Sun 1:20-4-6:45-9 Mon-Thu 4-6:45-9  
**Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa** (G) Fri-Sun 1:40-4:10-7:10-9:20 Mon-Thu 4:10-7:10-9:20  
**Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette** (STC) Sat 2  
**Punisher: War Zone** (18A) Fri 2:10-5:7:40-10:05 Sat 5:7:40-10:05 Sun 2:10-5:7:40 Mon-Thu 5:7-40-10:05  
**Quantum of Solace** (PG) Fri-Sun 12:50-3:40-6:50-9:50 Mon-Thu 3:40-6:50-9:50  
**Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi** (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Fri-Sun 1:10-4:50-8:30 Mon-Thu 4:50-8:30  
**Role Models** (14A) Fri-Thu 9:40  
**Transporter 3** (14A) Fri-Sat 2-4:40-7:20-10 Sun 2-4:40-10 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:20-10  
**Twilight** (PG) Fri-Sun 12:45-3:45-6:40-9:30 Mon-Thu 3:45-6:40-9:30  
**WWE: Armageddon** (STC) Sun 8

**EMPIRE 7 CINEMAS**  
111 Albert St., 3rd Floor  
World Exchange Plaza, 613-233-0209

**Australia** (PG) Fri 4:10-8 Sat-Sun 12:40-4:10-8 Mon-Thu 4:10-8  
**The Boy in the Striped Pajamas** (14A) Fri 4:20-7:10-9:40 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:20-7:10-9:40 Mon 4:20-9:40 Tue 4:20-7:10-9:40 Wed-Thu 4:20-9:40  
**Four Christmases** (PG) Fri 4:30-7:20-9:30 Sat-Sun 1:30-4:30-7:20-9:30 Mon-Thu 4:30-7:20-9:30  
**Milk** (STC) Fri 3:30-6:30-9:25 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:25 Mon-Thu 3:30-6:30-9:25 Fri 3:50-6:50-9:45 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:45 Mon-Thu 3:50-6:50-9:45  
**The Nutcracker Ballet** (STC) Sat  
**Quantum of Solace** (PG) Fri 3:40-7-9:35 Sat-Sun 1:3-40-7-9:35 Mon-Thu 3:40-7-9:35  
**Rachel Getting Married** (14A) Fri-Sat 4-6:40-9:50 Sun 1:10-4-6:40-9:50 Mon 4-9:50 Tue 4-6:40-9:50 Wed-Thu 4-9:50

**MAYFAIR THEATRE**  
1074 Bank St., 613-730-3403,  
mayfair-movie.com

Listings not available at press time.

**OTTAWA FAMILY CINEMA**  
710 Broadview Ave., 613-722-8218  
familycinema.ca

**Beverly Hills Chihuahua** (G) Sat 2

**RAINBOW CINEMAS**  
St. Laurent Centre,  
1200 St. Laurent Blvd.,  
613-688-0850

**Beverly Hills Chihuahua** (G) Fri 10:40-12:30-2:35-4:40-7 Sat 12:30-2:35-4:40-7 Sun-Thu 10:40-12:30-2:35-4:40-7  
**Changeling** (14A) Fri 10:30-1:45-5-8 Sat 1:45-5-8 Sun-Mon 1:45-5 Tue 10:30-1:45-5-8 Wed 1:45-



DISNEY ENTERPRISES

Bolt, from left, Mittens and Rhino shown in a scene from the animated film Bolt, which is currently in theatres.

GATINEAU

**CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION**  
100 rue Laurier, 819-776-7010

**Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk** (STC) Fri 11-2-5-7 Sat 11-2-5-7-9 Sun 11-2-5 Tue 11-2-5-8 Wed 11-2-5 Thu 2-5-9  
**Grand Canyon: Fleuve en Peril** (STC) Fri 1-10 Sat 10-4 Sun 10-1 Tue 4 Wed 1-9 Thu 4  
**Ocean Sauvage** (STC) Fri 4-9 Sat 1 Sun 4 Tue 1 Wed 4-8 Thu 1  
**Wild Ocean** (STC) Fri 12-3-8 Sat 12-3-8-10 Sun 12-3-6 Tue 12-3-9 Wed 12-3 Thu 3-8

**CINÉ-CAMPUS UQO**  
283 rue St-Jean-Bosco, 819-773-1888

Bataille à Seattle Fri-Sat 8

**CINÉMA DES GALERIES D'AYLMER**  
400 boul. Wilfrid-Lavigne,  
819-248-2526

**Babine** (STC) Fri-Thu 12:50-3:20-6:50-9:20  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still** (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-3:30-7:10-9:30  
**Four Christmases** (PG) Fri-Thu 1-3-7-9  
**Twilight** (PG) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:10-6:40-9:10

**CINÉ-STARZ**  
1100 boul. Maloney Ouest,  
819-568-8000

**Alvin et les Chipmunks** (G) Fri-Thu 12  
**Le Chihuahua de Beverly Hills** (G) Fri-Sun 12-1-35-3:10 Mon-Thu 12-5-35  
**La cite de l'ombre** (G) Fri-Thu 12  
**Des gars modèles** (13+) Fri-Sun 3:40-7:15-9 Mon-Thu 1:45-3:30-7-8:45  
**Décadence V** (16+) Fri-Sun 9:35 Mon-Thu 9:10  
**High School Musical 3: La dernière année** (G) Fri-Thu 1:40-3:35-5:30-7:25-9:20  
**Il y a longtemps que je t'aime** (G) Fri-Sun 1:35-7:35 Mon-Thu 1:35-3:35-7:10  
**L'Oeil du mal** (G) Fri-Sun 3:35-5:35-9:35 Mon-Thu 6:45-8:45

**L'Échange** (13+) Fri-Sun 4:45-7:10 Mon-Thu 1:40-4-10  
**WALL-E (v.f.)** (G) Fri-Sun 12-1:50-5:25 Mon-Thu 12-5-15

**GATINEAU 9**  
120 boul. de l'Hôpital, 819-568-6070

**007 Quantum** (13+) (Fri 6:30-9 Sat-Sun 12-2:45-6:30-9 Mon 6:30-9 Tue 12-2:45-6:30-9 Wed-Thu 6:30-9  
**Australie** (G) Fri 8 Sat-Sun 1:15-4:30-8 Mon 8 Tue 1:15-4:30-8 Wed-Thu 8  
**Babine** (STC) Fri 7-9:35 Sat-Sun 1-3:40-7-9:35 Mon 7-9:35 Tue 1-3:40-7-9:35 Wed-Thu 7-9:35  
**Le Jour o` la terre s'arrîta** (G) No Passes Fri 7:20-9:40 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:25-4:7-20-9:40 No Passes Mon 7:20-9:40 No Passes Tue 1:25-4:7-20-9:40 No Passes Wed-Thu 7:20-9:40  
**Madagascar 2 v.f.** (G) Fri 6:50-8:45 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:10-6:50-8:45 Mon 6:50-8:45 Tue 12:30-3:10-6:50-8:45 Wed-Thu 6:50-8:45  
**Quatre Noël** (G) Fri 7:15-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:20-7:15-9:30 Mon 7:15-9:30 Tue 12:40-3:20-7:15-9:30 Wed-Thu 7:15-9:30  
**Transporteur 3** (13+) Fri 6:40-9:05 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:40-9:05 Mon 6:40-9:05 Tue 12:50-3:50-6:40-9:05 Wed-Thu 6:40-9:05  
**Twilight: la fascination** (G) Fri 6:45-9:25 Sat-Sun 12:15-3:6:45-9:25 Mon 6:45-9:25 Tue 12:15-3:6:45-9:25 Wed-Thu 6:45-9:25  
**Volt** (G) Fri 7:05-9:10 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:30-7:05-9:10 Mon 7:05-9:10 Tue 1:10-3:30-7:05-9:10 Wed-Thu 7:05-9:10

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**007 Quantum** (13+) Fri-Thu 6:55-9:25  
**Australie** (G) Fri-Thu 2-5:30-9  
**Babine** (STC) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:15-6:35-9:05  
**Bolt** (G) Fri-Thu 1:05-3:35-7-9:10  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still** (G) Fri-Thu 12:30-1:30-2-4-6:45-7:30-9:20-9:50  
**Delgo** (STC) Fri-Thu 12:35-2:40-6:40  
**Four Christmases** (G) Fri-Thu 12:25-2-35-4:45-7-9:10  
**High School Musical 3: La dernière année** (G) Fri-Thu 12:30  
**Madagascar 2 : La grande Évasion** (G)

Fri-Thu 12:45-2:55-5:15-7:25-9:40  
**Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa** (G) Fri-Thu 1:20-4-7:20  
**Punisher: War Zone** (16+) Fri-Thu 2:50-6:30-9:15  
**Punisher: Zone de guerre** (16+) Fri-Thu 9:20  
**Quantum of Solace** (13+) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:05-7:15-9:35-9:55  
**Transporter 3** (13+) Fri-Thu 1:15-3:45-7:05-9:45  
**Twilight** (G) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:55-6:50-9:40  
**Twilight: la fascination** (G) Fri-Thu 12:5-4:15-7:10-9:50  
**Volt** (G) Fri-Thu 12:20-2:45-5:7:20-9:35

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**Australia** (PG) Fri 8:30 Sat-Sun 1-4:30-8:30 Mon-Thu 5:05-8:40  
**Bolt** (G) Fri 7-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:30-7-9:30 Mon-Thu 5-7-50  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still** (PG) No Passes Fri 7:20-10:10 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:10-4:10-7:20-10:10 No Passes Mon-Thu 5:50-8:50  
**Four Christmases** (PG) Fri 7:30-10 Sat-Sun 1:30-4:20-7:30-10 Mon-Thu 5:20-8:10  
**Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa** (G) Fri 6:50-9:20 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:20 Mon-Thu 5:30-8  
**Quantum of Solace** (PG) Fri 7:10-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:20-4-7:10-9:50 Mon-Thu 5:40-8:30  
**Twilight** (PG) Fri 6:40-9:40 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:40 Mon-Thu 5:10-8:20

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**Australia** (PG) Fri-Thu 1:30-5:15-9:10  
**Bolt** (G) Fri-Thu 1:15-3:45-7:05-9:25 Fri-Thu 12:05-2:35-5:05-7:35-10  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still** (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:20-1:45-3:20-4:35-6:20-7:25-9-10:20  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still: The**

**IMAX Experience** (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 1-4-7-9:45  
**Four Christmases** (PG) Fri-Thu 12:15-2:40-5-7:30-9:50  
**Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa** (G) Fri-Wed 12-2:10-4:30-6:40-8:50 Thu 12-2:10-4:30  
**Nothing Like the Holidays** (PG) Fri-Thu 12:25-3-5:20-7:40-10:10  
**Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette** (STC) Sat 2  
**Punisher: War Zone** (18A) Fri-Thu 12:35-3:30-7:10-9:40  
**Quantum of Solace** (PG) Fri-Sat 12:40-1:10-3:15-4:10-6:25-6:55-9:20-10:05 Sun 12:40-1:10-3:15-4:10-6:25-6:55-9:20-10:05 Wed 12:40-1:10-3:15-4:10-6:25-9:20-10:05 Thu 12:40-1:10-3:15-4:10-6:25-6:55-9:20-10:05  
**Role Models** (14A) Fri-Thu 1:25-3:50-6:15-8:45  
**Transporter 3** (14A) Fri-Thu 12:50-3:40-6:30-9:05  
**Twilight** (PG) Fri 12:10-1:20-3:10-4:20-6:35-7:20-9:30-10:15 Sun 12:10-1:20-3:10-4:20-6:35-9:30-10:15 Mon-Tue 12:10-1:20-3:10-4:20-6:35-9:30-10:15 Wed-Thu 12:10-1:20-3:10-4:20-6:35-9:30-10:15  
**WWE: Armageddon** (STC) Sun 8

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**Australia** (PG) Fri-Thu 8:30  
**Bolt** (G) Fri 7-9:15 Sat-Sun 1:30-4:20-7-9:15 Mon-Thu 7-9:15 Thu 11  
**The Day the Earth Stood Still** (PG) No Passes Fri 7:10-9:40 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:20-4-7:10-9:40 No Passes Mon-Thu 7:10-9:40  
**Delgo** (PG) Fri 6:30 Sat-Sun 1:40-4:10-6:30 Mon-Thu 6:30  
**Four Christmases** (PG) Fri 7:20-9:25 Sat-Sun 1:50-4:30-7:20-9:25 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:25  
**Quantum of Solace** (PG) Fri 6:50-9:10 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:50-6:50-9:10 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:10  
**Twilight** (PG) Fri 6:40-9:20 Sat-Sun 1-3:40-6:40-9:20 Mon-Thu 6:40-9:20

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## Music

## Metro recommends

## • NEIL YOUNG, SUGAR MOUNTAIN:

Revisit 1968 and hear a playful, young Neil perform a solo set of future classics with coffee-house intimacy.



## • BRITNEY SPEARS, CIRCUS:

Dance club anthems and sassy love songs strut along with an electronic-pop sound that's not the same old BS.



## • LOS CAMPESINOS!, WE ARE BEAUTIFUL, WE ARE DOOMED:

Frenetic indie-pop with clever thematic twists, girl-guy harmonies and a heap of cheeky U.K. charm.



METRO NEWS SERVICES

## The Dears are reborn

Montreal band returns with new disc following internal meltdown

ROB MCMAHON  
for Metro Canada

**What does a frontman do when faced with a band meltdown on the cusp of a new album?**

If you're Murray Lightburn from the Dears, you pick up a video camera. The band's website now features *The Gospel According to the Dears*, a candid mini documentary chronicling the band's history. And making it wasn't easy — especially Episode 3.

"(At some points) people were firing off both barrels in my face...It was a little painful at times, but also cathartic, and put everything in its place," said Lightburn. "(The project) originated when I had a friend telling me maybe I should see some kind of counselor, because of how much the meltdown of the band affected me ...

Instead of seeing a counselor, I decided to try and understand the band."

Throughout the band's 13-year history, Lightburn has employed a tightly managed, product-oriented approach. Beginning with a blueprint, he works to fit everyone's parts in it, rather than "throwing things around." For example, he describes *Missiles* as a musical. Disclaimer is the prologue that dissolves into a scene shot after an explosion, before moving to the main conflict point at the end of *Lights Off* and then fading to the album's denouement. While this process results in rewarding music — the best Dears songs combine mythological storytelling with intricate prog-rock arrangements — past members also bring up stifled creativity and high demands.

"I'm a noted control freak,



*Missiles*, the new album from Montreal's The Dears, was released last month.

no question — I'll confess to that any time of day — but I think I've learned...that it's OK to just allow something to happen. To close your eyes, spread your arms, fall backwards and see what happens," he said. "It's such a stressful thing, trying to control something as intangible as art can be."

After the recent conflict,

Lightburn began writing songs for a solo project, but as the work progressed, decided they were better expressed as Dears songs. Working with his wife and band partner Natalia Yan-chak, he tried to chill out.

As heard in the relaxed saxophone solo of album opener *Disclaimer*, (before the song progresses into

alternatively pleading and angry lyrics), the duo between Lightburn and Yan-chak during *Money Babies*, and the ended outro of *Saviour*, the new songs work to avoid being overshadowed by the accompanying drama. Lightburn describes them as big plates of mutton and gristle: he hopes listeners take time to chew over them.

## Yamagata's mountain inspiration

IAN NATHANSON  
for Metro Canada

**Secluding herself on a family-owned wooded property in Woodstock, N.Y., singer-songwriter-pianist Rachael Yamagata found her muse during a run down a mountain. Upon completing the run back up, a new song came to mind — *Elephants* — that ultimately set the tone for her latest two-CD effort, *Elephants ... Teeth Sinking Into Heart*.**

"I was there to get over a thousand things that had happened to me, but mainly a relationship breakup

that really floored me," the Virginia-born, Philadelphia-based 31-year-old tells Metro. "This guy I was seeing sent me this card with elephants on it — the idea being that elephants never forget — and the phrase in the card said something like, 'Now let's just forget our relationship and not give up hope.' I had that on my mind as I went for a run to re-energize."

The follow-up to Yamagata's 2004 full-length debut, *Happenstance*, initially had been completed in mid-2007. But a change in management and a subsequent drop from parent label RCA put *Elephants ...*

in limbo. (Warner eventually signed her.) That, combined with the aforementioned breakup, the death of her stepmom and a Dominican Republic vacation whereupon she damaged an eardrum while deep-sea diving drove Yamagata to yearn for practically no human contact by the time she arrived in Woodstock.

"Writing (about 160 songs) in the middle of the woods up at weird hours like 4 a.m. with all these weird circumstances going on mixed in with this weird isolation, brought out songs in a style I've never written before," Yamagata says.

After "about 80 attempts to sequence the album," she finally decided to issue a so-described 'record in two parts.' For the hushed 10-song first disc, Yamagata explains, "I wanted this extra-intimate, whispery vibe that got increasingly lush with the addition of strings and such — there was something very cinematic about the whole thing."

For the loud, up-tempo five-song second disc, she adds, "I had all these rock-driven songs, very biting, gritty lyrics but with a tongue-in-cheek sense of humour about it all, no sugarcoating whatsoever."



Rachael Yamagata plays *Cabaret Du Musee Juste Pour Rire* in Montreal on Saturday.

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- 2 Right Now (Na Na Na) Akon
- 3 My Life The Game
- 4 Poker Face Lady Gaga
- 5 Rock 'N' Roll Train AC/DC
- 6 Hot N Cold Katy Perry
- 7 Love Lockdown Kanye West
- 8 Womanizer Britney Spears
- 9 So What Pink
- 10 Winter Wonderland Ella Fitzgerald

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**NotGuilty**

My Guide to Working Hard, Raising Kids and Laughing Through the Chaos

Debbie Travis

# This Christmas, is TRUTH stranger than FICTION?

"Treat your kids like a paint job. It's all in the preparation. Take the time to sand and prime well and the results will be as good as perfect. Don't worry too much about the cracks or blotches — they just add character." —Debbie Travis



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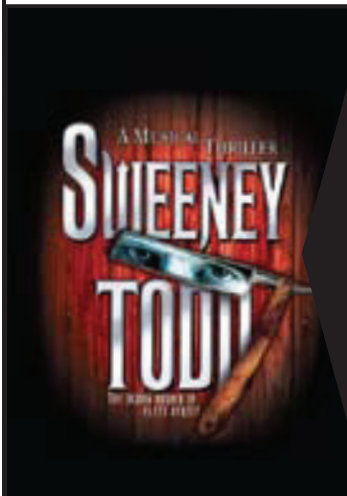
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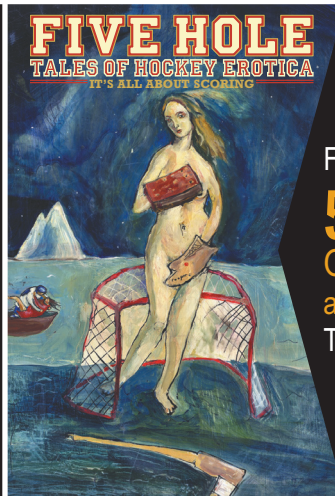
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# Music

# Fresh takes on Christmas jingles

## SoundCheck

# Alan Cross



alan@ongoinghistory.com

The way I see it, there are three types of people when it comes to the music of the holidays. There are those who love every single note of Christmas cheer. Then there are those who grind their teeth to the roots every time they're assaulted with yet another rendition of The Little Drummer Boy. And there's a third group — people like me who like new and unusual seasonal songs.

Some pathological urge demands that I collect non-traditional Christmas music. Here's a sample of what you'll hear in my house this holiday season.

- **White Christmas, Stiff**

**Little Fingers:** If we must

hear this song, the default version is from Belfast's best punk rock band. Available on Punk Rock Christmas (Rhino).

• **Run, Rudolph, Run, Lemmy and friends:** Lemmy (he of Motorhead and the interesting facial growths) teams up with Dave Grohl (Foo Fighters) and Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top) to offer a new guttural version of a secular classic. The album from which it comes also features contributions from Tony Iommi (Black Sabbath) and Alice Cooper. Available on *We Wish You a Metal Xmas and a Head-banging New Year* (Armoury Records).

- **Sometimes You Have to Work on Christmas (Sometimes), Harvey Danger:** Poignant tribute to those who don't get the day off. Especially meaningful to those who work in movie theatres. Available on: 20th Century Masters: The Millennium Collection (Universal)
- **A Christmas Duel, The Hives** featuring Cyndi Lauper

**per:** A Christmas song that starts with the line “I bought no gifts this year/And I slept with your sister” is guaranteed to attract attention. And what’s Cyn-di

Lauper doing here? Available free at [thehivesbroadcastingservice.com](http://thehivesbroadcastingservice.com).

- **Someday at Christmas, Jack Johnson:** Just the kind of carol you'd expect from a mellow surfer dude from Hawaii. Available on Brushfire Holidays, Vol. 1:

This Warm December  
(Brush-  
fire).

- Dad

**There are those who grind their teeth to the roots every time they're assaulted with yet another rendition of The Little Drummer Boy. And there's ... people like me who like new and unusual seasonal songs.**

**Threw Up on Christmas Day, Arrogant Worms:** Happy, big-band arrangement from Canadian comedy group. Not for the squeamish. Available on Christmas Turkey (Arro-

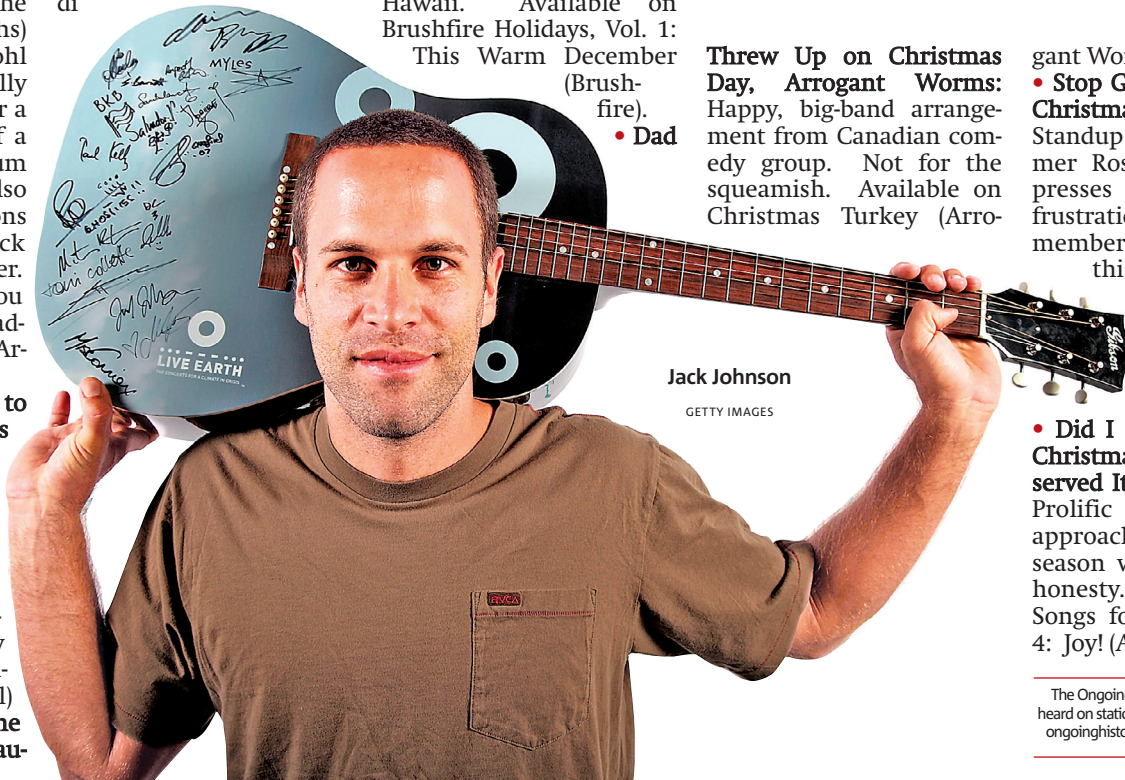
giant Worms indie label).

• **Stop Giving Me Crap for Christmas, Bobby Gaylor:** Standup comedian and former Roseanne writer expresses some universal frustrations. I don't remember where I found this. I think it was one of those errant MP3s that end up in my inbox from time to time.



• **Did I Make You Cry on Christmas?** (Well, You Deserved It!), Sufjan Stevens: Prolific indie songwriter approaches the holiday season with a certain, er, honesty. Available on: Songs for Christmas, Vol. 4: Joy! (Asthmatic Kitty).

The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at [ongoinghistory.com](http://ongoinghistory.com) and [exploremusic.com](http://exploremusic.com).



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**Barenaked Ladies in concert**

The Barenaked Ladies (frontman Steven Page, right) play the National Arts Centre Southam Hall on Saturday night. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

**Music**

# Bon Jovi top touring act

**Bon Jovi was the top touring act in 2008, just ahead of Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, according to sales data collected by Billboard.**

Bon Jovi's Lost Highway trek through North America and Europe, grossed

\$210.6 million US. Springsteen's Magic tour pulled in \$204.5 million. The survey covers the period from Nov. 14, 2007, through Nov. 11, 2008. Rounding out Billboard Boxscore's top 10 were Madonna, with \$162 million for the

still-underway Sticky & Sweet tour, the Police which earned \$150 million on the second leg of their reunion tour, Celine Dion, who took in \$91 million, and Kenny Chesney with \$86 million.

Others on the list were

Neil Diamond who earned \$81.2 million, the Spice Girls who netted \$70 million, the Eagles with \$56.6 million and Rascal Flatts (\$55.8 million). For the overall touring industry, grosses were about \$4 billion worldwide. **REUTERS**

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## Music

## Deborah Cox makes a Promise

ROB MCMAHON  
for Metro Canada**Thrifty times require doing more with less, but Deborah Cox enjoys it.**

The current to-do list of the Grammy and Juno award-winning R&B star would suggest she thrives on parsimony: A new album, *The Promise*, her third child expected to arrive in February and a tour in the spring, working with a tight budget and a streamlined staff of family and friends.

It's a far cry from playing Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida* on Broadway, where Cox spent part of the last six years out of the world spotlight. Yet the Toronto-born and raised soul singer and recent inductee into the Scarborough Walk of Fame says the stress of the challenge, daunting though it might be, just rolls off of her back. Now independent, the former Clive Davis protégé feels more liberated without a record label looking over her shoulder.

"It's a heck of a lot more work because we're in there doing everything, but the rewards are very big," says Cox, 34. "You don't have to answer to anybody. You set the pace for where you want to go."

"I work as hard as I want to work. I'm pacing myself because I'm my own boss but before, I was very eager to please and afraid to say no."

Cox calls *The Promise* a return to her R&B roots, a collection of slow- to mid-tempo back-to-basics jams she recorded with the help of fellow Grammy winners



The Promise is the latest album from Deborah Cox.

John Legend and Devo Springsteen.

Too slow for some music critics, who argue Cox's latest lacks her explosive vocal power and the euphoric grooves that got bodies moving when she was topping the dance charts in the late '90s — clubgoers of that time will recall the trance version of Nobody's Supposed To Be Here.

"It had been so long," she says. "The fact that I was doing so many types of things — the dance remix thing, the jazz album (Cox recorded *Destination Moon* last year, a tribute to Dinah Washington), and I felt like I really missed the audience. After six years, I was doing less and less of the R&B stuff. This really put it on the fast track."

While she has the luxury of pacing herself, Cox does admit she'll have to rise to the challenge of being a mom on tour once again, though it does help when you've got the kind of help she says she has.

"I've toured with baby-on-boob before," she laughs. "It's a juggling act. It really is about having a strong support system. We have a great family support system and a great staff. That really keeps everything from falling through the cracks, most of the time."



Holding On To Whatever It Is is the third full-length album from Winnipeg rock band The Waking Eyes.

## Whatever it takes

The Waking Eyes took four years to find right sound

NOELLE MUNARETTO  
for Metro Canada

**It took two side projects, three B-side discs, four years and more than 100 songs for The Waking Eyes to finally release their third full-length album, *Holding On To Whatever It Is*, to eager fans and critics.**

The Winnipeg-based quartet debuted their latest musical creation to stellar reviews, and recently completed a residency at a Toronto rock club.

For Matt Peters, one of the Waking Eyes' lead vocalists, the success is sweet. He also says it's overdue.

"This record was a long time coming and a long time in the works," says

Peters. "We just started writing songs, and we didn't really know what we were going to make. We didn't know where it was going to go because it was a process of re-introducing ourselves to our creative instincts."

Peters, along with fellow band members Joey Penner, Rusty Matyas and Steve Senkiw, wrote and recorded between fall 2005 and summer 2007. To select songs for the album, the band summoned their elementary school spirit and created a star rating system. They were left with 12 incredibly different, eclectic and sonorous tracks. Peters wouldn't have it any other way either.

"The songs that we ended up choosing, sure they're kind of all over

the place, but that's sort of what we do," he says. "That's our sound — we don't really have one."

The up-tempo feel *Holding On To Whatever It Is* exudes was also a purposeful choice, says Peters. "All and all, we definitely wanted to make something that was more danceable," he adds.

Since their formation in 2001, The Waking Eyes have struck a chord with the indie music scene in Canada and abroad. After signing with Coalition Entertainment Records, they were nominated for a Casby Award in 2004, took home the 2005 Canadian Independent Music Award for Favourite Group Of The Year, and most recently graced last October's Chart Magazine cover.

Having toured with Finger Eleven earlier this year, the band is now gearing up for a cross-Canada tour by performing their new material. Most of all, Peters says the residency introduces people to their unique sound.

"I don't really think there are that many bands doing what we do," says Peters. "I think we're trying to carve out our own niche."

Aside from the new record's release, Peters says the best part about this experience is being able to play alongside his fellow bandmates.

"I don't know any band who is genuinely as attached as we are. We love each other and that's good," he says. "I don't want to make music with anyone else."

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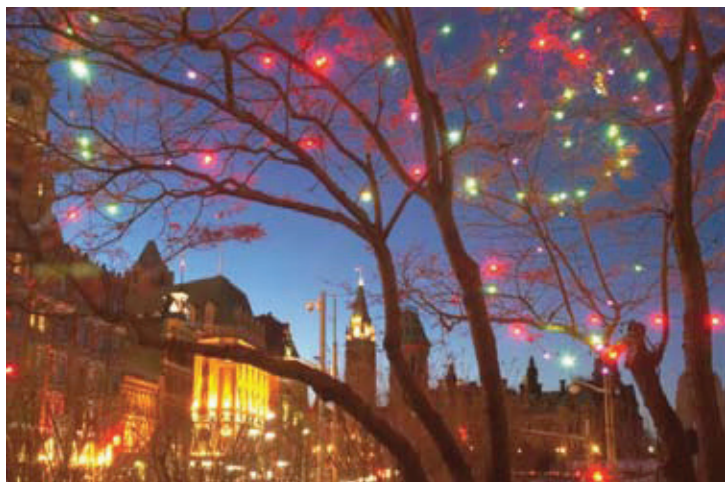
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Planet News  
Black's  
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### Other

Bank of Canada  
Currency Museum  
CBC/Radio-Canada  
The Hardy Arcade  
The Hill Times

### Dining

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Restaurant & Bar  
Edge Bar & Lounge  
Brixton's British Pub  
Carulli's Traditional Italian Eatery  
The Cock and Lion  
Ale House & Pub  
Palermo Café & Deli  
Ashtar Restaurant  
Yesterday's Restaurant  
Sushi Shop  
Centretown Tavern  
Subway  
Jazz'oo - European Bar & Lounge  
L'Ange Cafe  
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73 North Restaurant & Lounge  
D'Arcy McGee's Irish Pub

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## Television

# Televised assisted suicide criticized

Documentary by Canadian filmmaker on British TV called 'irresponsible' by critics

**Britain's Sky television was criticized this week for plans to screen the final moments of a terminally ill man who chose to commit suicide.**

The film of 59-year-old Craig Ewert's death in 2006 in a clinic in Switzerland is part of a Right to Die documentary made by Canadian filmmaker John Zaritsky and the first time British television has shown someone committing assisted suicide.

"If I don't go through with it, my choice is essentially to suffer, to inflict suffering on my family, and then die," Ewert says in the film, parts of which were shown on Sky

News.

Sky was due to broadcast the full documentary Wednesday night.

With his wife Mary at his side, Ewert, who was partially paralyzed by motor-neurone disease, is shown at the Dignitas suicide clinic in Zurich drinking a mixture of sedatives and turning off his own ventilator.

Anti-euthanasia campaigners said the broadcast was irresponsible "euthanasia voyeurism," which would create a false impression of a growing demand for assisted suicide in Britain.

## Allowed in Switzerland

• Assisted suicide has been allowed in Switzerland since the 1940s if performed by a non-physician who has no vested interest in the death. Both Dignitas, and another suicide clinic there called Exit, use lethal drugs prescribed by a physician to end the lives of those who seek their help.

"This will only intensify the pressure felt by such people, whether real or imagined, to contemplate taking their lives for fear of being a burden upon loved

ones, careers or a society that is short of resources," said campaign group Care Not Killing, an alliance of around 50 concerned organizations.

Writing in The Independent newspaper, Ewert's wife said her

husband — an American-born university professor who lived in Yorkshire, northern England — had wanted his death to be shown to help allay people's fears about death.

"He was keen to have it shown because when death is hidden and private, people don't face their fears about it. They don't acknowledge that it is going to happen, they don't reflect on it they don't want to face it," Mary Ewert wrote.

"He wanted to remove a veil so that people could see how comfortably someone could die who — without this option of assisted suicide — maybe would have had a very

painful death."

The film's Oscar-winning director Zaritsky told BBC radio he felt it was important to show the full process. Anything else, he said, would have given a "less than honest" view open "to charges that the death was unpleasant or cruel."

"By putting it out there in its entirety, people can judge for themselves," he said.

According to figures released last month, between 2001 and 2004, 91 percent of those who died with help from Dignitas were foreigners, mostly from Germany, France and Britain.

REUTERS

## Desperate Housewives may add two seasons

**SERIES** Desperate Housewives in 2012?

Series creator Marc Cherry let slip Wednesday that he is in talks with ABC about continuing the hit comedy-drama for another two seasons.

"I started recently talks with (ABC Entertainment president) Steve McPherson and (ABC Studios president) Mark Pedowitz about continuing the show for a ninth season," Cherry was quoted saying at a cake-cutting ceremony for the show's 100th episode. "We're going to find a way to make it work."

**"The five-year jump seems to have reinvigorated interest in the show, and the ratings are terrific."**

Series creator Marc Cherry

ABC confirmed the plan but stressed no deals have been made.

Housewives, now in its fifth season, is yet to be officially renewed

beyond May, but ABC has previously indicated it would stay on the schedule at least until 2010.

For the past year, Cherry had been saying publicly that he intended to set a firm end date for the series after seven seasons.

On Wednesday, he acknowledged that he recently had changed his mind as the show rebounded creatively and ratings wise this fall, ranking as ABC's top scripted series.

"The five-year jump seems to have reinvigorated interest in the show, and the ratings are terrific," Cherry said.

REUTERS

## Gay reality TV show in the works

**PROJECT** Showtime is developing a reality series documenting gay people coming out to friends and family.

The project is titled Way Out. In each episode, a closeted individual reveals their true sexual orientation during a group meeting.

Showtime has ordered a pilot presentation from Bryn Freedman, a former journalist and executive producer of A&E's Intervention, as part of its effort to bolster its unscripted slate.

"It's a show that has universal appeal because everybody can relate to having part of their lives hidden," said Freedman.

REUTERS

this week.

The shows, which took home top series honours at this year's Emmys and earned Writers Guild Award nominations this week, are among the TV nominees for the 20th annual Producers Guild Awards.

30 Rock will vie for the producer of the year award in episodic television — Comedy along with fellow NBC series The Office; two HBO shows, Curb Your Enthusiasm and Entourage; and Showtime's Weeds.

AMC's Mad Men was cited as a nominee for producer of the year in episodic television — drama along with FX's Damages, Showtime's Dexter and a pair of ABC series: Boston Legal, which had its series finale this week, and Lost.

In the non-fiction category, two magazine shows — PBS' Frontline and CBS' 60

**AWARDS** 30 Rock and Mad Men collected even more kudos

this week.

## 30 Rock, Mad Men up for producer honours



Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin star in 30 Rock, which has been nominated for a producer of the year award at the 20th annual Producers Guild Awards.

Minutes — will compete with Discovery Channel's Deadliest Catch, Bravo's Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List and Showtime's This American Life.

The nominees in the live entertainment/competition category include two Bravo series — Project Run-

way and Top Chef — vying with CBS' The Amazing Race, Comedy Central's The Colbert Report and HBO's Real Time With Bill Maher.

Awards will be handed out Jan. 24 at the Hollywood Palladium.

REUTERS



The cast of Desperate Housewives, from left, Eva Longoria Parker, Felicity Huffman, Marcia Cross, Teri Hatcher and Nicollette Sheridan.

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Tori Spelling is reportedly in talks again to appear on 90210. Although nothing is official, Spelling's Donna Martin character may arrive for a couple of episodes in the spring, possibly for one of the shows that Jason Priestley will direct. [TVGUIDE.COM](#)

Television

What's Oprah's weight got to do with it?

IntelleVision



**SOMETIMES AN ÉCLAIR IS JUST AN ÉCLAIR:** There's a theory making the rounds that the current economic downturn is a good thing in disguise — that being

shocked out of the complacent habits of prosperity and the social status quo is the ultimate form of “creative destruction,” burning away out-of-date ideas and habits and forcing us to look at the world in a whole new way. Sometimes, however, it's just an invitation for increasingly tenuous and absurd lunges at social diagnosis, such as a piece in Tina Brown's Daily Beast current affairs web maga-

zine this week by writer and comic Jessi Klein. The subject at hand is Oprah Winfrey's recent weight gain, the subject of an apparently anguished confession in the recent issue of Winfrey's O magazine, which Klein sees as a physical reflection of the subprime mortgage meltdown and credit crunch behind our current economic insecurity. “Oprah concludes that her latest chub-battle has

**It's hard to compare the extra time Oprah might have spent at the snack table backstage with defaulted mortgages.**

led her to adjust her weight objective,” Klein writes. “She's no longer striving to be thin, she

says, but simply to balance health with giving herself ‘the love and care’ she needs. So 2009 finds Oprah and the rest of the country adjusting to a new resolve. None of us, no matter what the size of our wallets, can be perfect. But when we waver from our budgets, we'll be downsizing our indulgences. For Oprah, that might mean a cookie instead of a whole cake; for the rest of us, perhaps a movie instead of an Escalade.”

It's at times like this that the tantalizing lure of metaphor — for writers especially — looks like epistemological crack, cheap, addictive and damaging. Oprah's weight gain is to be understood as one woman's caloric interpretation of social insecurity seeking solace in materialism; it's a sophomoric equation at best, one best discarded with undergrad English lit essays.

It's hard to compare the extra time Oprah might have spent at the snack

table backstage with credit card debt and defaulted mortgages; Oprah paid for the food she's eaten, after all, and her decision to supersize herself by 40 pounds wasn't facilitated by governments and banks underwriting fatty foods, and won't end in seizure and public auction of her waistline.

Klein seems to think that the cure for our widespread economic bingeing should be the prohibition of Escalades and “cashmere-iPoddy things that should have been off limits,” and quotes Oprah's assessment that her overindulgence was “a love issue.” Whatever imprudence might have motivated so much bad debt, love probably had less to do with it than woeful incomprehension of the concept of interest and the seriousness of the due date at the top of a bill.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

FRIDAY

OT	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/12/08	265	353	2	TVO	Adventures in Architecture	The Agenda With Steve Paikin	Heartbeat (N)	Allan Gregg	Film 101	Agenda-Paikin		
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	90210 (HDTV)	Life “Canyon Flowers”	NUMB3RS “Power”	News (N)		
	209	342	6	CHRO	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Wife Swap (N)	Don't Forget the Lyrics!	Stargate Atlantis	News (N)		
	196	311	7	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	The Rankin Family Reunion (N)	Supernanny (N)	Law & Order	News (N)		
	208	303	8	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town	Doctor Who	CBC News: The National	The Hour		
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Feed the Children	Lipstick Jungle (N)	Dateline NBC	News (N)		
	-	362	13	CBS	Dr. Phil (HDTV) (N)		Frosty	Frosty Returns	NUMB3RS “Power”	Two/Half Men		
	216	395	14	OMN2	Cold Case	News (N)	News (N)	News (N)	Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case	
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Songs of the Season	Lipstick Jungle (N)	Crusoe		News (N)	
	218	345	18	E!	The Insider (N)	E News	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?	Deal or No Deal	20/20 (HDTV)		News (N)	
	-	361	20	ABC	News (N)	Entertainment	Billy Graham Special	Supernanny (N)	20/20 (HDTV)		News (N)	
12/13/08	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?	Don't Forget the Lyrics!	News (N)		News	
	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight	Campbell Brown: No Bias	Larry King Live	Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)	Sportsnet Connected	Hockey Central		
	406	417	27	net	NHL Hockey Ottawa Senators at Washington Capitals. (HDTV) (Live)			Overtime				
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes	Les Grands reportages	Le Téléjournal (SC)	RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal		
	400	280	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	NBA Basketball Toronto Raptors at New Jersey Nets. (HDTV) (Live)		SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)				
	554	544	48	TEL	Santa Claus	Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show	Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	Father of Pride	Robot Chicken	Life's a Zoo
	557	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Jack Frost ** (1998, Fantasy)		(9:11) The Christmas Star (1986)		(10:45) Mr. Nanny **		
	551	542	65	YTV	Home Alone *** (1990, Comedy)	Macaulay Culkin.	Smallville “Siren”	Dark Oracle	Mystery Hnt.	Mystery Hnt.		
	615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami “Grand Prix”	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami “All In”		Criminal Minds		
	628	584	32	SPKE	CSI: NY (HDTV)	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	UFC Unleashed	UFC Unleashed		Jackass		
	616	521	39	SHO	The Best Years (DVS)	The Guard “Waheguru”	Teepees	Kenny-Spenny	Webdreams	Webdreams	Sin Cities	
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)	Greensburg (N)	Man vs. Wild (N)	Science of Interrogation		Daily Planet		
12/13/08	581	566	53	MTV	Girls-Latitude	After Show	Made Hip hop dancer.	A Double Shot of Love	The Hills	The Hills	After Show	
	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS “Honor Code”		Shockwave	Ultimate Engineering	Ax Men		Crime Stories	
	603	561	95	FN	The Main	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover	Chef Abroad	The Wild Chef	Diner, Drive-In	Diner, Drive-In	Ace of Cakes

SATURDAY

OT	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/13/08	265	353	2	TVO	National Geographic (N)	Bad Day at Black Rock *** (1955)		The Interviews	Prince of the City *** (1981, Crime Drama)			
	211	331	3	GTV	Billy Graham Special (N)	Doc Nancy is mugged.	Painkiller Jane	Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)		
	209	342	6	CHRO	Anne of Green Gables *** (1985, Drama)	Megan Follows, Colleen Dewhurst, Richard Farnsworth. Premiere.				News (N)		
	196	311	7	CTV	W-FIVE-Peace Warrior	Last Exit (2006, Suspense) Kathleen Robertson. (DVS)			Law & Order: SVU	News (N)		
	208	303	8	CBC	NHL Hockey Tampa Bay Lightning at Ottawa Senators. (HDTV) (Live)				NHL Hockey: Canucks at Oilers			
	-	360	9	NBC	Fighting for Life	It's a Wonderful Life **** (1946, Comedy-Drama) James Stewart, Donna Reed.				Local 4 News		
	-	362	13	CBS	Paid Program	The Insider (N)	Eleventh Hour “Cardiac”	48 Hours-Boot Camp	48 Hours Mystery (N)	CSI: NY		
	216	395	14	OMN2	Chinese Rest.	Trendy Zone	The One Man Olympics (2008, Historical Drama) Li Zhaojin.		Omni News: Mandarin	Chinese Rest.		
	214	344	15	CITY	Survivorman (DVS)	Crusoe (HDTV)	Out of Sync (2000, Drama) Gail O'Grady.			News (N)		
	218	345	18	E!	E News	The Soup	Soup Presents	Behind-Scenes	Surviving Christmas * (2004, Comedy) Ben Affleck.	News (N)		
	-	361	20	ABC	Entertainment Tonight	Funnies Home Videos	Surviving Christmas * (2004, Comedy) Ben Affleck.			News (N)		
	-	365	36	FOX	Bernie Mac	Seinfeld	Cops (N)	Cops	America's Most Wanted	News (N)		
12/13/08	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs This Week (HDTV)	Special Investigations	Larry King Live	D.L. Hughley Breaks the News	Investigations			
	406	417	27	net	English Premier League Soccer Liverpool vs. Hull City.		The Ultimate Fighter (Live)					
	126	730	28	RDI	Le Journal RDI	Humanima	Découverte (HDTV) (SC)	La Factice	Le Téléjournal			
	400	280	30	TSN	E:60 (N)	Boxing (HDTV)		SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)				
	554	544	48	TEL	Johnny Test	Looney Tunes Christmas	Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow		
	557	540	51	FAM	That's-Raven	Zoe 101	Life Derek	Call Me Claus ** (2001, Comedy)		(10:33) Bob the Butler		
	551	542	65	YTV	A Flintstones Christmas Carol		He-Man, She-Ra Christmas	Invader Zim	Ren & Stimpy	Dark Oracle	Mystery Hnt.	
	615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami “Identity”	CSI: Miami “Whacked”	CSI: Miami “10-7”	The Sopranos (HDTV)		The Sopranos		
	628	584	32	SPKE	The Ultimate Fighter (HDTV)	The Ultimate Fighter (HDTV)						
	616	521	39	SHO	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	Recipe for a Perfect Christmas (2005, Romance-Comedy)		The Descent *** (2005, Horror), Alex Reid			
	520	505	42	DIS	Destroyed	Destroyed	Mighty Ships “Maersk”	Canada's Worst Driver	Criss Angel	Criss Angel	A Haunting	
	581	566	53	MTV	MTV Live	After	Made Cheerleading.	MTV News	Girls-Latitude	Cribs	Cribs	
12/14/08	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS “Kill Ari”		Ancestors	Ancestors	The Sentinel ** (2006, Suspense) Michael Douglas, Kim Basinger.			
	603	561	95	FN	Food Network Holiday Special	Restaurant Makeover	Top Chef		Kitchen Nightmares	The F Word		

SUNDAY

OT	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/14/08	265	353	2	TVO	Palin-Sahara	The Choir “Boys Don't Sing”	Oliver Twist (2007, Drama) Timothy Spall.			The View From Here		
	211	331	3	GTV	The Simpsons	Family Guy	Survivor: Gabon (HDTV) (Season Finale) (N)	Survivor: Gabon (Live)		News (N)		
	209	342	6	CHRO	Funnies Home Videos	Gossip Girl (HDTV)	Deck the Halls * (2006, Comedy) Danny DeVito. (DVS)			News (N)		
	196	311	7	CTV	Anne of Green Gables: A New Beginning (2008, Drama) Shirley MacLaine. (DVS)			CSI: NY		News (N)		
	208	303	8	CBC	Red-Nosed Reindeer	The Polar Express *** (2004, Fantasy), Nona Gaye			CBC News: Sunday Night (N)	fifth estate		
	-	360	9	NBC	Football Night in America	(8:15) NFL Football New York Giants at Dallas Cowboys. From Texas Stadium in Irving, Texas.						
	-	362	13	CBS	60 Minutes	Survivor: Gabon (HDTV) (Season Finale) (N)			Survivor: Gabon (Live)	CSI: NY		
	216	395	14	OMN2	Bhangra Generation	Aaram	Airang Korea	Word for Word	Trendy Zone	Tongues: History Language	Word for Word	
	214	344	15	CITY	TBA	Two/Half Men	Friends	Friends	Friends	Stylista	News (N)	
	218	345	18	E!	Greatest Myst.	Greatest Myst.	Extreme Makeover: Home	Recipe for a Perfect Christmas (2005, Romance-Comedy)			News (N)	
	-	361	20	ABC	Funnies Home Videos	The Santa Clause 2 ** (2002, Comedy) Tim Allen.		Desperate Housewives		News (N)		
	-	365	36	FOX	King of the Hill	King of the Hill	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	News (N)	Sportsworks
12/14/08	500	500	33	CNN	Newsroom	Special Investigations	Larry King Live	D.L. Hughley Breaks the News	Investigations			
	406	417	27	net	NFL Football	Sportsnet Connected	World Combat			Sportsnet Con.		
	126	730	28	RDI	Le Journal RDI	Marie-Claude	Une heure sur Terre (SC)	Le Téléjournal	Les Coulisses du pouvoir	Regard	Le Téléjournal	
	400	280	30	TSN	Football Night in America	(8:15) NFL Football New York Giants at Dallas Cowboys. From Texas Stadium in Irving, Texas.						
	554	544	48	TEL	George-Jungle	Fat Albert	Scooby-Doo	Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	A Scanner Darkly *** (2006, Action)	
	557	540	51	FAM	That's-Raven	Zoe 101	Life Derek	Han. Montana	Babes in Toyland ** (1997, Musical)		Dungeons & Dragons *	
	551	542	65	YTV	Charlie Brown	Flintstone Xms	A Flintstone Christmas	(9:15) ALF	(9:45) ALF	(10:15) Falcon Beach	Mystery Hnt.	
	615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami “Three-Way”	CSI: Miami “Rush”	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		CSI: Miami		
	628	584	32	SPKE	UFC Unleashed	UFC Unleashed (N)	Spike TV's Video Game Awards 2008 (HDTV) (Live)			Video Awards		
	616	521	39	SHO	The Guard (HDTV)	The Christmas Choir (2008, Drama)	Jason Gedrick.	Lady in the Water ** (2006, Fantasy)				
	520	505	42	DIS	MythBusters	Canada's Worst Driver	MythBusters				A. Bourdain	
	581	566	53	MTV	Made Hip hop dancer.	Cribs	Cribs	Cribs	Cribs	Cribs	MTV Live	
12/14/08	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS “Mind Games”	Lost Worlds	The Quick and the Dead ** (1995, Western) Sharon Stone.					
	603	561	95	FN	Jamie at Home	Exotic	Challenge	Iron Chef America	Jamie at Home Christmas Spe	Chef School		



The subject at hand is Oprah Winfrey's recent weight gain.

Christmas TV begins

**A Muppets Christmas: Letters To Santa**

**Air date:** Dec. 17  
**Network:** CTV

**Whoopi** Goldberg, Uma Thurman, Richard Griffiths and Jane Krakowski keep up the Muppets tradition of idiosyncratic guest choices on the latest holiday special from the people who brought you Peter Sellers singing Cigarettes, Whisky And Wild, Wild Women on the Muppet Show.

**The Best Of The Hills Parodies**

**Air date:** Saturday  
**Network:** MTV

**Making fun** of The Hills is actually more fun than

**Rick's TV Picks**

watching the thing, a fact that gets celebrated with this hour-long special collecting Hills takeoffs — there are obviously more than enough.

**Mall Santas**

**Air date:** Dec. 18  
**Network:** Global

**It's not** Miracle on 34th Street, but it's not Bad Santa, either. The world of the Mall Santa gets explored with three pro Santas whose lives might not exactly be Christmas every day.

RICK MCGINNIS/METRO CANADA

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<div>2003 HYUNDAI ELANTRA</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$7,995</div><div>\$79 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2003 JEEP LIBERTY</div> <div><div>4 IN-STOCK</div></div> <div><div>\$9,995</div><div>\$99 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2003 KIA RIO RXV</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$6,995</div><div>49,000 Kilometers</div></div>	<div>2003 NISSAN SENTRA</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$6,995</div><div>\$69 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2004 ACURA MDX</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$22,995</div><div>7 Passenger</div></div>	
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<div>2004 HONDA PILOT</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$19,995</div><div>8 Passenger</div></div>	<div>2004 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE</div> <div><div>2 IN-STOCK</div></div> <div><div>\$10,995</div><div>\$109 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2004 HYUNDAI SONATA</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$7,995</div><div>\$79 Bi-Weekly</div></div>			
<div>2004 MAZDA 3</div> <div><div>5 IN-STOCK</div></div> <div><div>\$11,995</div><div>\$119 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2004 MAZDA MPV</div> <div><div>5 IN-STOCK</div></div> <div><div>\$7,995</div><div>\$79 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2004 MAZDA RX8</div> <div><div>LEATHER</div></div> <div><div>\$16,995</div><div>GT Model</div></div>			
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<div>2004 VOLKSWAGEN GOLF</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$13,995</div><div>28,000 Kilometers</div></div>	<div>2005 AUDI ALL-ROAD QUATTRO</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$23,995</div><div>AWD Model</div></div>	<div>2005 BUICK ALLURE</div> <div><div>LEATHER</div></div> <div><div>\$11,995</div><div>\$119 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2005 CHEVROLET COBALT</div> <div><div>3 IN-STOCK</div></div> <div><div>\$7,995</div><div>\$79 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2005 CHEVROLET OPTRA</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$7,995</div><div>\$79 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	
<div>2005 DODGE CARAVAN</div> <div><div>570-IN-GO</div></div> <div><div>\$7,995</div><div>\$79 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2005 DODGE DAKOTA</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$13,995</div><div>4X4 Model</div></div>	<div>2005 DODGE RAM 1500</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$12,995</div><div>\$129 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	<div>2004 DODGE DURANGO</div> <div><div>2 IN-STOCK</div></div> <div><div>\$16,995</div><div>44,000 Kilometers</div></div>	<div>2005 FORD FOCUS</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$8,995</div><div>\$89 Bi-Weekly</div></div>	
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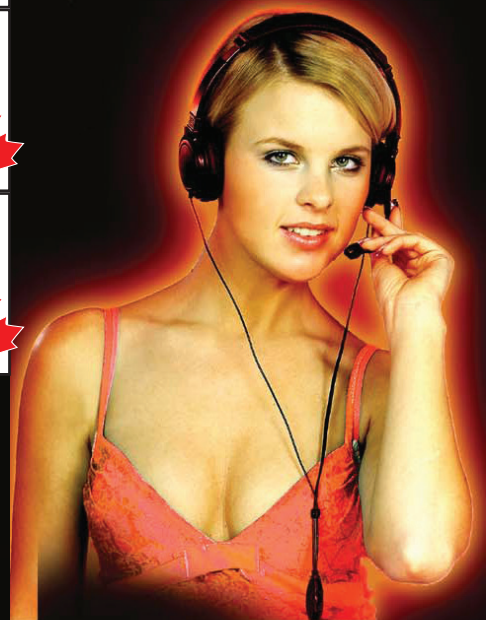
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**"I'm engaged": Bachelor star**  
The upcoming season of The Bachelor doesn't begin until Jan. 5, but its star, Jason Mesnick, is already hearing wedding bells. "I'm engaged!" he announced. **TVGUIDE.COM**

## Television

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# CBS chief keeps faith in networks

**Just about everyone is dumping on broadcast TV — except Leslie Moonves.**

At the UBS media conference this week, NBC Universal's Jeff Zucker said the broadcast model simply doesn't work anymore. Walt Disney Co CFO Tom Staggs called ABC "one of the more challenged businesses we have." Cable powerhouse Turner presented research that shows the broadcast season is off "to its worst start ever."

"I'm here to tell you the model ain't broken," CBS Corp. CEO Moonves countered Wednesday at the UBS gathering in New York. "You can still make a lot of money in network television. We like 10 o'clock shows."

Moonves offered that given NBC's ratings situation — fourth place — it probably was a good move to schedule a new Jay Leno show five nights a week at 10 p.m. CBS, on the other hand, wins that hour on four of those five nights.

"Certain people are having audience erosion, and certain people aren't," said Moonves, who then offered a prediction: "I will bet anybody who would like to bet that CSI: Miami on Monday night at 10 o'clock will beat Jay by a lot. Remember that — by a lot."

This year, only CBS has shown any kind of life in the ratings, with the lone genuine scripted hit (The Mentalist — last week's top show among viewers) and only modest declines in adults 18-49, viewers and adults 25-54. ABC, NBC and Fox are down sharply.

According to Jack Wakshlag, chief research officer at Turner, it's the worst year the Big Four have had in households since 1995-96 and the worst to date in terms of declines among

FREDERICK M. BROWN/GETTY IMAGES



Actor Simon Baker, left, and executive producer/writer Bruno Heller of The Mentalist speak during the Television Critics Association media tour held in July in Beverly Hills, Calif. CBS' The Mentalist has been one of the few scripted hits of this year.

**"You can still make a lot of money in network television."**

CBS Corp. CEO  
Leslie Moonves

adults 18-49, a demographic coveted by advertisers. Nielsen data show that the four networks this season have lost 2.2 million viewers in the demo and 2.6 million households. Wakshlag said that is comparable to losing the Philadelphia region, the nation's No. 4 TV market.

At the same time, TV viewing overall never has been higher, and ad-sup-

ported cable has garnered record viewership this year. It has 59 per cent of household primetime viewing, up three per cent year-over-year, compared with the Big Four's 33 per cent, down 6 per cent. The Big Four's declines are steeper among adults 18-49.

Liberty Corp. CEO Greg Maffei said Wednesday that broadcast TV might have to change to become more like cable networks with their dual revenue streams.

Moonves acknowledged that changes would come, slowly, in broadcast TV but would "not happen for a long, long, long time."

REUTERS

## Author speaks on gay issue

Crime writer Patricia Cornwell is a master storyteller but had shied away from telling her own tale, until this year when uproar about same-sex marriages in the United States prompted her to go public.

Cornwell, 52, has been married for two years to Staci Ann Gruber, an assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

The author said she always used to feel uncomfortable with the focus on her personal life, but she has accepted this comes with her success as a writer.

Cornwell, who has just released her 16th Scarpetta book called Scarpetta, said the heated debate on same-sex marriages in the United States made it time for her to talk about her own.

California struck down same-sex marriage last month, reversing a court decision that had affirmed the right.

"If people like me don't take a stand then it will only get worse. We just want to live and let live and be treated in the same way straight people are treated," said Cornwell.

REUTERS

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**Wood headed to Broadway**

Evan Rachel Wood is headed for the Broadway stage after reportedly landing the leading female role in the musical adaptation of box-office smash Spider-Man. [IMDB.COM](http://IMDB.COM)

**Going Out****Mix of Six****HOT & HAPPENING WEEKEND EVENTS****Homeward Bound: The Insensitive Journey**

Sunday, 8 p.m.  
Bytown Tavern, 292 Elgin St.

Insensitivity Training, a troupe of talented comedians known for their brand of politically incorrect humour, use their fun improv show to raise money for a good cause — Operation Go Home. Tickets are \$10 at the door, or can be purchased in advance at Bytown Tavern or Hooley's.

**The Kings of the Kilburn High Road**

Tuesday-Saturday, 8 p.m.;  
weekend matinees 2:30 p.m.  
The Gladstone, 910  
Gladstone Ave.

Seven Thirty Productions presents a revival of Jimmy Murphy's funny and tragic play about a group of friends mourning the loss of their friend. Featuring the full original cast of Jerome Bourgeois, Pierre Brault, Don Laflamme, David McCallum and Brian Stewart. Opens Tuesday. For tickets call 613-233-4523.

**Jon Lajoie**

Friday, 7 p.m.  
Babylon, 317 Bank St.

Montreal's popular comedy singer, actor and star of the series Du Auberge Chien Noir returns to Ottawa after two sold-out shows earlier this fall. Tickets \$15 from Compact Music, Norm Clothing and Top of the World.

**Group of Seven Nutcracker**

Friday, 7 p.m.; tomorrow, 1  
and 4 p.m.  
Centrepointe Theatre, 101  
Centrepointe Dr.

Ballet Jörgen Canada presents its newest full-length ballet just in time for the holidays. The show features the landscapes of Franklin Carmichael, Tom Thomson and L.L. Fitzgerald, as well as Tchaikovsky's classic score. Tickets are \$35.50 to \$45. For info visit [www.centrepointetheatre.com](http://www.centrepointetheatre.com).

**Barenaked Ladies**

Saturday, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.  
National Arts Centre,  
Southam Hall

It's a double dose of Barenaked Ladies when the band performs their family show, Snacktime! in the afternoon, as well as a special Barenaked for the Holidays concert of their popular hits and holiday favourites in the evening. For tickets to either show visit [www.nac.ca](http://www.nac.ca).

**Barbara Gamble: Natural Affinities**

Now through Jan. 4  
Canadian Museum of Nature,  
240 McLeod St.

The exhibition features works by Canadian artist Barbara Gamble, from 1995 through 2008, including Gatineau Forest and other wilderness and urban landscapes. For more information visit [www.nature.ca](http://www.nature.ca).

**Metro's 7<sup>th</sup> Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now****1 Heath Ledger**

Late actor Heath Ledger is garnering attention again for his work as the Joker in *The Dark Knight*, fresh out on DVD. He's been posthumously named best actor by the Australian Film Institute and best supporting actor by the Washington D.C. Area Film Critics Association.

**2 Hollywood baby boom**

The result of spring fever, perhaps? A bevy of celebrities announced new arrivals this week: Eric Mabius (boy), America's Next Top Model judge Nigel Barker (girl), Amy Jo Johnson (girl) and Jonny Lee Miller (boy).

**3 Grey's Anatomy**

The ABC medical show has spawned more off-set drama, with Brooke Smith, who played Dr. Erica Hahn, saying there are no hard feelings after being booted off the show. And now there are rumours swirling that T.R. Knight is looking to be released from his contract.

**4 The cape jacket**

Stars like singer Kylie Minogue and actress Leighton Meester are wrapping up in sleeveless, hooded jackets, with beige and blue being the colours of choice, [femalefirst.co.uk](http://femalefirst.co.uk) reports. The cape combines the warmth of a cardigan with the smart silhouette of a jacket.

**5 Elisha Cuthbert**

Actress Elisha Cuthbert has so far taken the high road by remaining mum on comments made by her ex, Dallas Stars Sean Avery. He referred to Cuthbert as "my sloppy seconds" in a TV interview while poking fun at rival and Cuthbert's current flame, Dion Phaneuf.

**6 Kate Winslet**

Oscar-nominated actress Kate Winslet is back on the big screen to show off her acting chops in *The Reader* and *Revolutionary Road*.

**7 New Year's Eve**

No plans? Head to New York to see the Jonas Brothers, Taylor Swift and Lionel Richie ring in 2009 on Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve.

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— Bill Brownstein, *Montreal Gazette*

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**Taylor Hanson's wife gives birth to a son**  
Taylor Hanson, the middle brother of the rock trio Hanson, and his wife Natalie welcomed a son, Viggo Moriah, on Tuesday in Tulsa, Okla. **PEOPLE.COM**

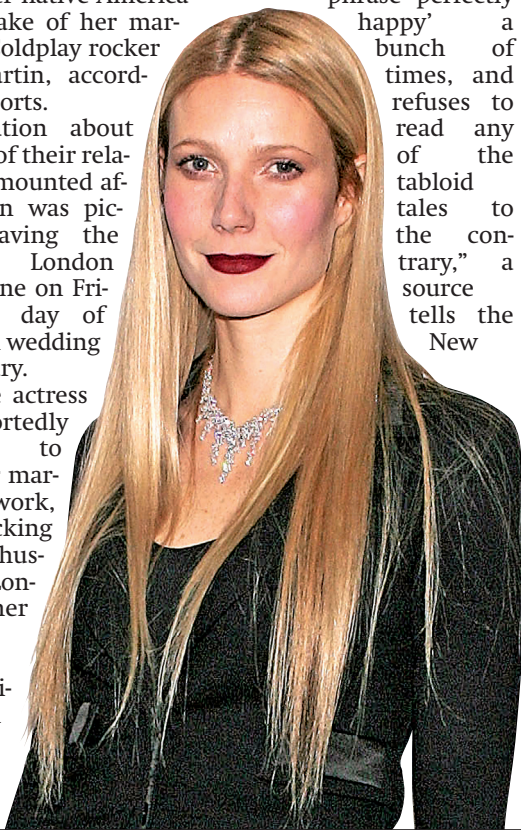
## Celebrity Buzz

# Paltrow works on marriage

**RELATIONSHIPS** Gwyneth Paltrow will snub Christmas in her native America for the sake of her marriage to Coldplay rocker Chris Martin, according to reports.

Speculation about the state of their relationship mounted after Martin was pictured leaving the family's London home alone on Friday, the day of their fifth wedding anniversary.

But the actress is reportedly desperate to make her marriage work, and is sticking by her husband in London rather than spending the holidays with her family in the U.S.



"Gwyneth says she's totally fine. She's used the phrase 'perfectly happy' a bunch of times, and refuses to read any of the tabloid tales to the contrary," a source tells the New York Daily News.

York Daily News.

The insider insists Paltrow is "staying overseas until the holidays are over," and is "trying to make their marriage better."

However, reports also allege Paltrow is keen to follow in the footsteps of her newly single friend, pop star Madonna, who announced she was divorcing husband Guy Ritchie in October.

"Gwyneth has the Madonna bug ... bad," the source adds. "It's eerie. Gwyneth acts normally until Madonna comes around, and then Gwyneth is all about Madonna, all the time. Madge has even introduced Gwyneth to all her friends."

Representatives for Paltrow and Madonna both denied the reports, with the Oscar-winner's representative insisting the claims were "complete nonsense."

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**

# Jessica wants wedding?

**FAMILY** Jessica Simpson reportedly wants to "get married in Texas in the summer and get pregnant soon after," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer, who is dating football star Tony Romo, is said to be desperate to tie the knot and start her family, after seeing her younger sister Ashlee give birth to her own son Bronx Mowgli last month.

"Jessica recently sat Tony down for a baby talk," a friend of Jessica's told In Touch Weekly magazine. "Unlike

Ashlee, Jessica doesn't want to get pregnant and then get married. She's a little more traditional, so she'd like to marry Tony first and then get pregnant, ideally on their honeymoon. She wants to get engaged in early 2009, married in Texas in the summer and get pregnant soon after."

It was recently revealed Jessica is "convinced" Dallas Cowboys star Romo is going to propose to her over Christmas.

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**

# Cate carries nuptial regret

**PEOPLE** Cate Blanchett regrets her wedding day, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actress, who married playwright Andrew Upton 11 years ago, would love to relive the special day because she has no photographs to remember it by.

"The only moment of my life I would possibly recapture is getting

remarried again because we didn't take any photographs," Blanchett says.

"We didn't have any money at the time and we couldn't afford a photographer."

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**



# Aniston is amused

**PEOPLE** Jennifer Aniston has poked fun at the constant media interest in her relationship with ex-husband Brad Pitt and his partner Angelina Jolie, likening the trio to an "insane Bermuda triangle," imdb.com reports.

Speculation surrounding the actress' supposed rivalry with Jolie reached boiling point following Aniston's remarks to U.S. Vogue magazine in October, in which she branded Jolie "uncool."



The comments came after Jolie admitted she had fallen in love with Pitt while making 2005's Mr. and Mrs. Smith — when he was still married to Aniston.

But in a new interview with America's GQ magazine, in which Aniston poses naked apart from a men's tie, the star admits she finds the whole situation amusing.

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**

# Adams details proposal

**MARRIAGE** Actress Amy Adams came close to sabotaging her fiancé's marriage proposal, because she was in a bad mood, imdb.com reports.

Adams announced her engagement to her artist boyfriend of six years, Darren Le Gallo, back in July. But she didn't reveal how an uncharacteristic bout of diva behaviour almost ruined the whole occasion.

"He had something big and dramatic

planned," she says. "He was going to take me out to a really nice dinner and then take me to the top of the Empire State Building. He's scared of heights, so he thought that would be significant. But I completely ruined it by saying I wanted to go see a play instead of going to dinner ... He proposed to me in Central Park in a carriage."

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**



# Tyler dating Bing: report

**DATING** Actress Liv Tyler has found love with model/actress Elizabeth Hurley's multimillionaire ex-boyfriend Steve Bing, according to tabloid reports.

Tyler, 31 who has been single since splitting with husband Royston Langdon earlier this year, was reportedly spotted enjoying a romantic meal with movie producer Bing in Los Angeles on Nov.

30, imdb.com reports.

According to Star magazine, Bing — the father of Hurley's six-year-old son Damian — has been pursuing Tyler for some time.

"She was determined to make a good impression," a source tells Star magazine. "They were laughing and smiling throughout the meal, which lasted two hours."

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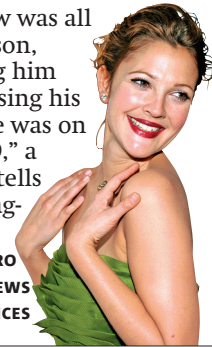
# Drew linked to Jason Segel

**DATING** Drew Barrymore has sparked reports she's dating funnyman Jason Segel, five months after ending her year-long romance with actor Justin Long, imdb.com reports.

The actress split from Long in July and has most recently been linked to Gossip Girl star Ed Westwick. But Barrymore has reportedly moved on again with the How I Met Your Mother star Segel, after the pair were allegedly spotted getting cosy at Los Angeles' Chateau Marmont on Nov. 28.

"Drew was all over Jason, rubbing him and kissing his face. He was on Cloud 9," a source tells Star magazine.

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**



# Pitt admits early love with Jolie

**RELATIONSHIPS** Even though we all assumed it was true, Brad Pitt openly admits in the new issue of Rolling Stone that he "fell in love" with Angelina Jolie while he was still with Jennifer Aniston, popeater.com reports.

It's the same reason Mr. & Mrs. Smith tops as his favourite movie of all time, he said. "(Angelina) is not only the woman I love, but one of the people on this planet who I have the greatest respect for. I think she's as honourable as anyone I've ever met."

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Take Five

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
18							19	20				
			21				22			23	24	25
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35				36				
37			38				39					
			40				41			42	43	44
45	46	47				48	49					
50						51				52		
53						54				55		

Sudoku

**HOW TO PLAY:** Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

			1		5			
	5						7	
7	1	2				5	8	3
			8	5	2	9		
4								6
			3	6	7	4		
8	4	6				2	9	1
	9						5	
			8	9				

Crossword across

- 1 Standard score  
4 Medicos  
8 Benefit  
12 A mean Amin  
13 Maze goal  
14 Stop up  
15 Nickname for football's George Halas  
17 Hodgepodge  
18 High-IQ sort  
19 Wall St. debut  
21 Caviar base  
22 Hit repeatedly  
26 Sacrifice site  
29 Shriner's chapeau  
30 Before  
31 U.K. conservative
- 32 Seafood selection  
33 Soft cheese  
34 Harem room  
35 Grow  
36 Ship of the desert  
37 Apple variety  
39 Book-spine abbr.  
40 Literary collection  
41 Fleet  
45 Cereal choice  
48 Litter member  
50 Indonesian island  
51 Cupid's alias  
52 2-Down's companion  
53 Stylish  
54 Paddock parent  
55 Homer's neighbor Flanders

Crossword down

- 1 Knight's backup  
2 Leading man?  
3 Philbin co-host  
4 Credit card user  
5 Daisy variety  
6 U.S. spy org.  
7 Like some shirts  
8 Ice cream utensil  
9 Every iota  
10 Japanese pond fish  
11 Diva's problem  
16 Splendid setup  
20 Dispensable candy  
23 Salon request  
24 Ontario's neighbor  
25 Stagger  
26 Having surmounted
- 27 California city  
28 Snare  
29 A clever person  
32 Hors d'oeuvres  
33 Mild  
35 Victory  
36 Bit part in a whodunit  
38 "War of the Worlds" effect  
39 Smoke or fog  
42 Mideast gulf  
43 Peace symbol  
44 On in years  
45 English channel?  
46 "Go, team!"  
47 "The Greatest"  
49 Spoon-bender Geller

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

H	E	L	D		S	A	L	T		P	R	O		
O	B	O	E		O	B	E	Y		O	I	L		
P	O	R	C	E	L	A	I	N		R	D			
I	N	D	I	G	O		A	S	P	E	N			
			D	O		P	I	N	T	O				
D	O	P	E		S	O	B		Y	I	P	S		
O	N	O			O	R	E		S	O	P			
G	E	R	M		A	C	T		Z	E	T	A		
			R	A	L	P	H		A	E				
C	H	I	C	O					A	R	R	E	S	T
R	I	D		P	O	R	T	F	O	L	I	O		
E	R	G		E	C	H	O		E	B	B	S		
W	F	E		S	T	O	P		S	A	S	S		

2	3	4	1	8	7	5	9	6
6	7	1	5	2	9	3	8	4
5	9	8	6	4	3	1	2	7
7	4	3	2	5	1	8	6	9
1	2	9	8	7	6	4	5	3
8	6	5	9	3	4	2	7	1
3	1	2	7	6	8	9	4	5
9	8	7	4	1	5	6	3	2
4	5	6	3	9	2	7	1	8

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SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

- Under 13 min .....Genius  
13-17 min.....Scholar

- 17-21 min .....Smart  
21-25 min .....Not bad  
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Tuna Provençale on a Baguette

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large tomatoes, peeled and chopped  
5 black olives (not oil-packed), pitted and finely chopped  
1 baguette, about 24 in. (60 cm) long  
2 tbsp (25 mL) extra virgin olive oil  
1 large onion  
1 large green pepper  
2 cans (170 g) tuna in water, drained  
2 tbsp (25 mL) white wine vinegar  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

METHOD:

1. Mix tomatoes and olives in a medium bowl, and then let stand until juicy, about 15 minutes.  
2. Meanwhile, cut baguette almost in half lengthwise (do not slice completely through). Open baguette like a book, being careful not to separate bread. Pull out about 1/2 cup (125 mL) of the soft centre with your hands. Using 1/2 tb-

- sp (7 mL) oil, brush cut sides of the bread. Then spread on tomato mixture and any juices that have collected in the bowl.  
3. Cut onion in half through stem end, then cut crosswise into thin semicircles. Cut pepper in half, then crosswise into thin semicircles. Layer onion, green pepper and tuna over tomato mixture. Whisk vinegar, garlic and remaining oil in a small bowl. Drizzle over tuna.  
4. Wrap stuffed baguette tightly in plastic wrap. Weigh down with a heavy frying pan and let stand at room temperature until the ingredients have soaked into bread, 30 minutes. Cut diagonally into 4 equal pieces before serving.

SERVES 4

[rd.ca](http://rd.ca)

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to [rd.ca](http://rd.ca) or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!



Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES

MARCH 21-APRIL 20



A trustworthy person has remarkable news. A disturbance can produce a warning. You'll want to escape from a weird dilemma.

LIBRA

SEPT 23-OCT 23



A disagreement about benefits will lead to teasing. A friend will happily agree to make changes. A separation leads to a breakthrough.

TAURUS

APRIL 21-MAY 21



Reorganize a sluggish system right away. A threat will jog somebody's memory. You can get ahead by leaving a sad place.

SCORPIO

OCT 24-NOV 22



Show your support when a relationship begins. An eccentric person is making a big mistake. A friend causes a hullabaloo.

GEMINI

MAY 22-JUNE 21



An amiable manner influences a realist. Don't count your blessings in public. You shouldn't push optimism to a cynical person.

SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21



Some people will be switching partners. By not worrying, you can correct a problem. Yield to the facts, no matter what happens.

CANCER

JUNE 22-JULY 22



A prosperous guy needs medical attention. Shabbiness will not be acceptable to a lady. Don't be a fool when crossing a street.

CAPRICORN

DEC 22-JAN 20



A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

LEO

JULY 23-AUG 23



Check your documents carefully. A magnificent man takes the other side in a conflict. Difficulties arise when you are too aggressive.

AQUARIUS

JAN 21-FEB 18



A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

VIRGO

AUG 24-SEPT 22



Time passes slowly while awaiting a disclosure. A decent man gives a warning about unreliability. An alarmist rouses the neighbourhood.

PISCES

FEB 19-MARCH 20



An ill friend will discuss his personal agony. Your lack of concern is the point of a story. Keep your side of a bargain.

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